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OF
HANNAH MORE.

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STRICTURES

ON THE

MODERN SYSTEM

OF

FEMALE EDUCATION.

WITH

A VIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES AND CONDUCT PREVALENT AMONG WOMEN OF RANK AND FORTUNE.

May you ſo raiſe your character that you may help to make the next age a better thing, and leave poſterity in your debt, for the advantage it ſhall receive by your example.
LORD HALIFAX.

Domeſtic Happineſs, thou only bliſs
Of Paradiſe that has ſurviv'd the Fall!
Thou art not known where PLEASURE is ador'd,
That reeling Goddeſs with the zoneleſs waiſt.
Forſaking thee, what ſhipwreck have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown!

COWPER.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is a ſingular injuſtice which is often exerciſed towards women, firſt to give them a very defective education, and then to expect from them the moſt undeviating purity of conduct;—to train them in ſuch a manner as ſhall lay them open to the moſt dangerous faults, and then to cenſure them for not proving faultleſs. Is it not unreaſonable and unjuſt, to expreſs diſappointment if our daughters ſhould, in their ſubſequent lives, turn out preciſely that very kind of character for which it would be evident to an unprejudiced by-ſtander that the whole ſcope and tenor of their inſtruction had been ſyſtematically preparing them?

Some reflections on the preſent erroneous ſyſtem are here with great deference ſubmitted to public conſideration. The

Author is apprehenſive that ſhe ſhall be accuſed of betraying the intereſts of her ſex by laying open their defects: but ſurely, an earneſt wiſh to turn their attention to objects calculated to promote their true dignity, is not the office of an enemy. So to expoſe the weakneſs of the land as to ſuggeſt the neceſſity of internal improvement, and to point out the means of effectual defence, is not treachery, but patriotiſm.

Again, it may be objected to this little work, that many errors are here aſcribed to women which by no means belong to them *excluſively*, and that it ſeems to confine to the ſex thoſe faults which are common to the ſpecies: but this is in ſome meaſure unavoidable. In ſpeaking on the qualities of one ſex, the moraliſt is ſomewhat in the ſituation of the Geographer, who is treating on the nature of one country:—the air, ſoil, and produce of the land which he is deſcribing, cannot fail in many eſſential points to reſemble

thoſe

thoſe of other countries under the ſame parallel; yet it is his buſineſs to deſcant on the one without adverting to the other; and though in drawing his map he may happen to introduce ſome of the neighbouring coaſt, yet his principal attention muſt be confined to that country which he propoſes to deſcribe, without taking into account the reſembling circumſtances of the adjacent ſhores.

It may be alſo objected that the opinion here ſuggeſted on the ſtate of manners among the higher claſſes of our countrywomen, may ſeem to controvert the juſt encomiums of modern travellers, who generally concur in aſcribing a decided ſuperiority to the ladies of this country over thoſe of every other. But ſuch is, in general, the ſtate of foreign manners, that the comparative praiſe is almoſt an injury to *Engliſh* women. To be flattered for excelling thoſe whoſe ſtandard of excellence is very low, is but a degrading kind of commendation; for the value of all

praiſe derived from ſuperiority, depends on the worth of the competitor. The character of Britiſh ladies, with all the unparalleled advantages they poſſeſs, muſt never be determined by a compariſon with the women of other nations, but by comparing them with what they themſelves might be if all their talents and unrivalled opportunities were turned to the beſt account.

Again, it may be ſaid, that the Author is leſs diſpoſed to expatiate on excellence than error: but the office of the hiſtorian of human manners is delineation rather than panegyric. Were the end in view eulogium and not improvement, eulogium would have been far more gratifying, nor would juſt objects for praiſe have been difficult to find. Even in her own limited ſphere of obſervation, the Author is acquainted with much excellence in the claſs of which ſhe treats;—with women who, poſſeſſing learning which would be thought extenſive in the other ſex, ſet an example of deep humility to their own;—

women who, diſtinguiſhed for wit and genius, are eminent for domeſtic qualities;—who, excelling in the fine arts, have carefully enriched their underſtandings;—who, enjoying great affluence, devote it to the glory of God;—who, poſſeſſing elevated rank, think their nobleſt ſtyle and title is that of a Chriſtian.

That there is alſo much worth which is little known, ſhe is perſuaded; for it is the modeſt nature of goodneſs to exert itſelf quietly, while a few characters of the oppoſite caſt ſeem, by the rumour of their exploits, to fill the world; and by their noiſe to multiply their numbers. It often happens that a very ſmall party of people, by occupying the fore-ground, by ſeizing the public attention, and monopolizing the public talk, contrives to appear to be the great body: a few active ſpirits, provided their activity take the wrong turn and ſupport the wrong cauſe, ſeem to fill the ſcene; and a few diſturbers of order, who have the talent of thus exciting

a falſe

a falſe idea of their multitudes by their miſchiefs, actually gain ſtrength, and ſwell their numbers, by this fallacious arithmetic.

But the preſent work is no more intended for a panegyric on thoſe purer characters who ſeek not human praiſe becauſe they act from a higher motive, than for a ſatire on the avowedly licentious, who, urged by the impulſe of the moment, reſiſt no inclination; and, led away by the love of faſhion, diſlike no cenſure, ſo it may ſerve to reſcue them from neglect or oblivion.

There are, however, multitudes of the young and the well-diſpoſed, who have as yet taken no decided part, who are juſt launching on the ocean of life, juſt about to loſe their own right convictions, virtually preparing to counteract their better propenſities, and unreluctantly yielding themſelves to be carried down the tide of popular practices: ſanguine, thoughtleſs, and confident of ſafety.—To theſe the Author would gently hint, that, when once embarked, it will be no longer eaſy to ſay

to

to their paſſions, or even to their principles, " Thus far ſhall ye go, and no further." Their ſtruggles will grow fainter, their reſiſtance will become feebler, till borne down by the confluence of example, temptation, appetite, and habit; reſiſtance and oppoſition will ſoon be the only things of which they will learn to be aſhamed.

Should any reader revolt at what is conceived to be unwarranted ſtrictneſs in this little book, let it not be thrown by in diſguſt before the following ſhort conſideration be weighed.——If in this Chriſtian country we are actually beginning to regard the ſolemn office of Baptiſm as merely furniſhing an article to the pariſh regiſter; —if we are learning from our indefatigable Teachers, to conſider this Chriſtian rite as a legal ceremony retained for the ſole purpoſe of recording the *age* of our children; —then, indeed, the prevailing Syſtem of Education and Manners on which theſe volumes preſume to animadvert, may be adopted with propriety, and perſiſted in with

with ſafety, without entailing on our children or on ourſelves the peril of broken promiſes or the guilt of violated vows.—But, if the obligation which Chriſtian Baptiſm impoſes be really binding;—if the ordinance have, indeed, a meaning beyond a mere ſecular tranſaction, beyond a record of names and dates;—if it be an inſtitution by which the child is ſolemnly devoted to God as his Father, to Jeſus Chriſt as his Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as his Sanctifier; if there be no definite period aſſigned when the obligation of fulfilling the duties it enjoins ſhall be ſuperſeded;—if, having once dedicated our offspring to their Creator, we no longer dare to mock Him by bringing them up in ignorance of His will and neglect of His laws;—if, after having enliſted them under the banners of Chriſt, to fight manfully againſt the three great enemies of mankind, we are no longer at liberty to let them lay down their arms; much leſs to lead them to act as if they

were in alliance inftead of hoftility with thefe enemies;—if, after having promifed that they fhall renounce the vanities of the world, we are not allowed to invalidate the engagement;—if, after fuch a covenant we fhould tremble to make thefe renounced vanities the fupreme object of our own purfuit or of *their* inftruction;—if all this be really fo, then the Strictures on Modern Education in the firft of thefe volumes, and on the Habits of polifhed Life in the fecond, will not be found fo repugnant to truth, and reafon, and common fenfe, as may on a firft view be fuppofed.

But if on candidly fumming up the evidence, the defign and fcope of the Author be fairly judged, not by the cuftoms or opinions of the worldly, (for every Englifh fubject has a right to object to a fufpected or prejudiced jury,) but by an appeal to that divine law which is the only infallible rule of judgment; if on fuch an appeal her views and principles fhall be found cenfurable

able for their rigour, abſurd in their requiſitions, or prepoſterous in their reſtrictions, ſhe will have no right to complain of ſuch a verdict, becauſe ſhe will then ſtand condemned by that court to whoſe deciſion ſhe implicitly ſubmits.

Let it not be ſuſpected that the Author arrogantly conceives *herſelf* to be exempt from that natural corruption of the heart which it is one chief object of this ſlight work to exhibit; that ſhe ſuperciliouſly erects herſelf into the impeccable cenſor of her ſex and of the world; as if from the critic's chair ſhe were coldly pointing out the faults and errors of another order of beings, in whoſe welfare ſhe had not that lively intereſt which can only flow from the tender and intimate participation of fellow-feeling.

With a deep ſelf-abaſement, ariſing from a ſtrong conviction of being indeed a partaker in the ſame corrupt nature; together with a full perſuaſion of the many and great defects of theſe volumes, and a ſincere con-

ſciouſneſs of her inability to do juſtice to a ſubject which, however, a ſenſe of duty impelled her to undertake, ſhe commits herſelf to the candour of that Public which has ſo frequently, in her inſtance, accepted a right intention as a ſubſtitute for a powerful performance.

BATH,
March 14, 1799.

STRICTURES

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OF

FEMALE EDUCATION.

CHAP. I.

Addreſs to women of rank and fortune, on the effects of their influence on ſociety.— Suggeſtions for the exertion of it in various inſtances.

AMONG the talents for the application of which women of the higher claſs will be peculiarly accountable, there is one, the importance of which they can ſcarcely rate too highly. This talent is influence. We read of the greateſt orator of antiquity, that the wiſeſt plans which it had coſt him years to frame, a woman could overturn

in a ſingle day; and when we conſider the variety of miſchiefs which an ill-directed influence has been known to produce, we are led to reflect with the moſt ſanguine hope on the beneficial effects to be expected from the ſame powerful force when exerted in its true direction.

The general ſtate of civilized ſociety depends more than thoſe are aware who are not accuſtomed to ſcrutinize into the ſprings of human action, on the prevailing ſentiments and habits of women, and on the nature and degree of the eſtimation in which they are held. Even thoſe who admit the power of female elegance on the manners of men, do not always attend to the influence of female principles on their character. In the former caſe, indeed, women are apt to be ſufficiently conſcious of their power, and not backward in turning it to account. But there are nobler objects to be effected by the exertion of their powers, and unfortunately, ladies, who are often unreaſonably confident where they ought to be diffident,

are

are ſometimes capriciouſly diffident juſt when they ought to feel where their true importance lies; and, feeling, to exert it. To uſe their boaſted power over mankind to no higher purpoſe than the gratification of vanity or the indulgence of pleaſure, is the degrading triumph of thoſe fair victims to luxury, caprice, and deſpotiſm, whom the laws and the religion of the voluptuous prophet of Arabia exclude from light, and liberty, and knowledge: and it is humbling to reflect, that in thoſe countries in which fondneſs for the mere perſons of women is carried to the higheſt exceſs, *they are ſlaves*; and that their moral and intellectual degradation increaſes in direct proportion to the adoration which is paid to mere external charms.

But I turn to the bright reverſe of this mortifying ſcene; to a country where our ſex enjoys the bleſſings of liberal inſtruction, of reaſonable laws, of a pure religion, and all the endearing pleaſures of an equal, ſocial, virtuous, and delightful intercourſe: I turn with an earneſt

earneſt hope, that women, thus richly endowed with the bounties of Providence, will not content themſelves with poliſhing, when they are able to reform; with entertaining, when they may awaken; and with captivating for a day, when they may bring into action powers of which the effects may be commenſurate with eternity.

In this moment of alarm and peril, I would call on them with a "warning "voice," which ſhould ſtir up every latent principle in their minds, and kindle every ſlumbering energy in their hearts: I would call on them to come forward, and contribute their full and fair proportion towards the ſaving of their country. But I would call on them to come forward, without departing from the refinement of their character, without derogating from the dignity of their rank, without blemiſhing the delicacy of their ſex: I would call them to the beſt and moſt appropriate exertion of their power, to raiſe the depreſſed tone of public morals, and to awaken the drowſy ſpirit of religious principle.

ciple. They know too well how arbitrarily they give the law to manners, and with how despotic a sway they fix the standard of fashion. But this is not enough; this is a low mark, a prize not worthy of their high and holy calling. For, on the use which women of the superior class may now be disposed to make of that power delegated to them by the courtesy of custom, by the honest gallantry of the heart, by the imperious control of virtuous affections, by the habits of civilized states, by the usages of polished society; on the use, I say, which they shall hereafter make of this influence, will depend, in no low degree, the well-being of those states, and the virtue and happiness, nay perhaps the very existence, of that society.

At this period, when our country can only hope to stand by opposing a bold and noble *unanimity* to the most tremendous confederacies against religion, and order, and governments, which the world ever

ſaw; what an acceſſion would it bring to the public ſtrength, could we prevail on beauty, and rank, and talents, and virtue, confederating their ſeveral powers, to exert themſelves with a patriotiſm at once firm and feminine, for the general good! I am not ſounding an alarm to female warriors, or exciting female politicians: I hardly know which of the two is the moſt diſguſting and unnatural character. Propriety is to a woman what the great Roman critic ſays action is to an orator; it is the firſt, the ſecond, the third requiſite. A woman may be knowing, active, witty, and amuſing; but without propriety ſhe cannot be amiable. Propriety is the centre in which all the lines of duty and of agreeableneſs meet. It is to character what proportion is to figure, and grace to attitude. It does not depend on any one perfection, but it is the reſult of general excellence. It ſhews itſelf by a regular, orderly, undeviating courſe; and never ſtarts from its ſober orbit into any ſplendid eccentricities; for it

it would be aſhamed of ſuch praiſe as it might extort by any deviations from its proper path. It renounces all commendation but what is characteriſtic; and I would make it the criterion of true taſte, right principle, and genuine feeling, in a woman, whether ſhe would be leſs touched with all the flattery of romantic and exaggerated panegyric than with that beautiful picture of correct and elegant propriety which Milton draws of our firſt mother, when he delineates

> "Thoſe thouſand *decencies* which daily flow
> "From all her words and actions."

Even the influence of religion is to be exerciſed with diſcretion. A female Polemic wanders nearly as far from the limits preſcribed to her ſex, as a female Machiavel or warlike Thaleſtris. Fierceneſs has made almoſt as few converts as the ſword, and both are peculiarly ungraceful in a female. Even *religious* violence has human tempers of its own to indulge, and

and is gratifying itſelf when it would be thought to be ſerving God. Let not the bigot place her natural paſſions to the account of Chriſtianity, or imagine ſhe is pious when ſhe is only paſſionate. Let her bear in mind that a Chriſtian doctrine is always to be defended with a Chriſtian ſpirit, and not make herſelf amends by the ſtoutneſs of her orthodoxy for the badneſs of her temper. Many, becauſe they defend a religious opinion with pertinacity, ſeem to fancy that they thereby acquire a kind of right to withhold the meekneſs and obedience which ſhould be neceſſarily involved in the principle.

But the character of a conſiſtent Chriſtian is as carefully to be maintained, as that of a fiery diſputant is to be avoided; and ſhe who is afraid to avow her principles, or aſhamed to defend them, has little claim to that honorable title. A profligate, who laughs at the moſt ſacred inſtitutions, and keeps out of the way of every thing which comes under the appearance of formal inſtruction, may be diſ-

concerted

concerted by the modeſt, but ſpirited rebuke of a delicate woman, whoſe life adorns the doctrines which her converſation defends: but ſhe who adminiſters reproof with ill-breeding, defeats the effect of her remedy. On the other hand, there is a diſhoneſt way of labouring to conciliate the favour of a whole company, though of characters and principles irreconcilably oppoſite. The words may be ſo guarded as not to ſhock the believer, while the eye and voice may be ſo accommodated, as not to diſcourage the infidel. She who, with a half-earneſtneſs, trims between the truth and the faſhion; who, while ſhe thinks it creditable to defend the cauſe of religion, yet does it in a faint tone, a ſtudied ambiguity of phraſe, and a certain expreſſion in her countenance, which proves that ſhe is not diſpleaſed with what ſhe affects to cenſure, or that ſhe is afraid to loſe her reputation for wit, in proportion as ſhe advances her credit for piety, injures the cauſe more

than

than he who attacked it; for ſhe proves, either that ſhe does not believe what ſhe profeſſes, or that ſhe does not reverence what fear compels her to believe. But this is not all: ſhe is called on, not barely to repreſs impiety, but to excite, to encourage, and to cheriſh every tendency to ſerious religion.

Some of the occaſions of contributing to the general good which are daily preſenting themſelves to ladies, are almoſt too minute to be pointed out. Yet of the good which right-minded women, anxiouſly watching theſe minute occaſions, and adroitly ſeizing them, might accompliſh, we may form ſome idea by the ill-effects which we actually ſee produced, through the mere levity, careleſneſs, and inattention, (to ſay no worſe,) of ſome of thoſe ladies, who are looked up to as ſtandards in the faſhionable world.

I am perſuaded, if many a woman of faſhion, who is now diſſeminating unintended miſchief, under the dangerous no-

tion that there is no harm in any thing ſhort of poſitive vice, and under the falſe colours of that indolent humility, " What good " can *I* do ?" could be brought to ſee in its collected force the annual aggregate of the random evil ſhe is daily doing, by conſtantly throwing a *little* caſual weight into the wrong ſcale, by mere inconſiderate and unguarded chat, ſhe would ſtart from her ſelf-complacent dream. If ſhe could conceive how much ſhe may be diminiſhing the good impreſſions of *young* men; and if ſhe could imagine how little amiable levity or irreligion makes her appear in the eyes of thoſe who are older and abler, (however looſe their own principles may be,) ſhe would correct herſelf in the firſt inſtance, from pure good nature; and in the ſecond, from worldly prudence and mere ſelf-love. But on how much higher principles would ſhe reſtrain herſelf, if ſhe habitually took into account the important doctrine of conſequences: and if ſhe reflected that the

leſſer

leſſer but more habitual corruptions make up by their number, what they may ſeem to come ſhort of by their weight: then perhaps ſhe would find that, among the higher claſs of women, *inconſideration* is adding more to the daily quantity of evil than almoſt all other cauſes put together.

There is an inſtrument of inconceivable force, when it is employed againſt the interests of Chriſtianity: it is not reaſoning, for that may be anſwered; it is not learning, for luckily the infidel is not ſeldom ignorant; it is not invective, for we leave ſo coarſe an engine to the hands of the vulgar; it is not evidence, for happily we have that all on our ſide: it is RIDICULE, the moſt deadly weapon in the whole arſenal of impiety, and which becomes an almoſt unerring ſhaft when directed by a fair and faſhionable hand. No maxim has been more readily adopted, or is more intrinſically falſe, than that which the faſcinating eloquence of a noble ſceptic of the laſt age contrived to render ſo popular,

that

that "ridicule is the teſt of truth *. It is no teſt of truth itſelf; but of their firmneſs who aſſert the cauſe of truth, it is indeed a ſevere teſt. This light, keen, miſſile weapon, the irreſolute, unconfirmed Chriſtian will find it harder to withſtand, than the whole heavy artillery of infidelity united.

A young man of the better ſort, has, perhaps, juſt entered upon the world, with a certain ſhare of good diſpoſitions and right feelings; neither ignorant of the evidences, nor deſtitute of the principles of Chriſtianity: without parting with his reſpect for religion, he ſets out with the too natural wiſh of making himſelf a reputation, and of ſtanding well with the faſhionable part of the female world. He preſerves for a time a horror of vice, which makes it not difficult for him to reſiſt the groſſer corruptions of ſociety; he can as yet repel profaneneſs; nay, he can withſtand the

* Lord Shafteſbury.

banter

banter of a club. He has ſenſe enough to ſee through the miſerable fallacies of the new philoſophy, and ſpirit enough to expoſe its malignity. So far he does well, and you are ready to congratulate him on his ſecurity. You are miſtaken: the principles of the ardent, and hitherto promiſing adventurer are ſhaken, juſt in that very ſociety where, while he was looking for pleaſure, he doubted not of ſafety. In the company of certain women of good faſhion and no ill fame, he makes ſhipwreck of his religion. He ſees them treat with levity or deriſion ſubjects which he has been uſed to hear named with reſpect. He could confute an argument, he could unravel a ſophiſtry; but he cannot ſtand a laugh. A ſneer, not at the truth of religion, for that perhaps is by none of the party diſbelieved, but at its gravity, its unſeaſonableneſs, its dulneſs, puts all his reſolution to flight. He feels his miſtake, and ſtruggles to recover his credit; in order to which, he adopts the gay affectation of trying to ſeem worſe than he really

really is; he goes on to ſay things which he does not believe, and to deny things which he does believe; and all to efface the firſt impreſſion, and to recover a reputation which he has committed to *their* hands on whoſe report he knows he ſhall ſtand or fall, in thoſe circles in which he is ambitious to ſhine.

That cold compound of irony, irreligion, ſelfiſhneſs, and ſneer, which make up what the French (from whom we borrow the thing as well as the word) ſo well expreſs by the term *perſiflage*, has of late years made an incredible progreſs in blaſting the opening buds of piety in young perſons of faſhion. A cold pleaſantry, a temporary cant word, the jargon of the day (for the "great vulgar" have their jargon) blights the firſt promiſe of ſerioufneſs. The ladies of *ton* have certain watch-words, which may be detected as indications of this ſpirit. The clergy are ſpoken of under the contemptuous appellation of *The Parſons*. Some ludicrous

aſſociation

aſſociation is infallibly combined with every idea of religion. If a warm-hearted youth has ventured to name with enthuſiaſm ſome eminently pious character, his glowing ardour is extinguiſhed with a laugh: and a drawling declaration, that the perſon in queſtion is really a mighty *harmleſs* good creature, is uttered in a tone which leads the youth ſecretly to vow, that whatever elſe he may be, he will never be a good harmleſs creature.

Nor is ridicule more dangerous to true piety than to true taſte. An age which values itſelf on parody, burleſque, irony, and caricature, produces little that is ſublime, either in genius or in virtue; but they *amuſe*, and we live in an age which *muſt* be amuſed, though genius, feeling, truth, and principle, be the ſacrifice. Nothing chills the ardours of devotion like a frigid ſarcaſm; and, in the ſeaſon of youth, the mind ſhould be kept particularly clear of all light aſſociations. This is of ſo much importance that I

have known perſons who, having been early accuſtomed to certain ludicrous combinations, were never able to get their minds cleanſed from the impurities contracted by this habitual levity, even after a thorough reformation in their hearts and lives had taken place: their principles became reformed, but their imaginations were indelibly ſoiled. They could deſiſt from ſins which the ſtrictneſs of Chriſtianity would not allow them to commit, but they could not diſmiſs from their minds images, which her purity forbade them to entertain.

There was a time when a variety of epithets were thought neceſſary to expreſs various kinds of excellence, and when the different qualities of the mind were diſtinguiſhed by appropriate and diſcriminating terms; when the words venerable, learned, ſagacious, profound, acute, pious, worthy, ingenious, valuable, elegant, agreeable, wiſe, or witty, were uſed as ſpecific marks of diſtinct characters. But the le-

giſlators of faſhion have of late years thought proper to compriſe all merit in one eſtabliſhed epithet; an epithet which, it muſt be confeſſed, is a very deſirable one as far as it goes. This term is exclusively and indiſcriminately applied wherever commendation is intended. The word *pleaſant* now ſerves to combine and expreſs all moral and intellectual excellence. Every individual, from the graveſt profeſſors of the graveſt profeſſion, down to the trifler who is of no profeſſion at all, muſt earn the epithet of *pleaſant*, or muſt be contented to be nothing; and muſt be conſigned over to ridicule, under the vulgar and inexpreſſive cant word of a *bore*. This is the mortifying deſignation of many a reſpectable man, who, though of much worth and much ability, cannot perhaps clearly make out his letters patent to the title of *pleaſant*. For, according to this modern claſſification there is no intermediate ſtate, but all are compriſed within the ample bounds

of one or other of theſe two comprehenſive terms.

We ought to be more on our guard againſt this ſpirit of ridicule, becauſe whatever may be the character of the preſent day, its faults do not ſpring from the redundancies of great qualities, or the overflowings of extravagant virtues. It is well if more correct views of life, a more regular adminiſtration of laws, and a more ſettled ſtate of ſociety, have helped to reſtrain the exceſſes of the heroic ages, when love and war were conſidered as the great and ſole buſineſſes of human life. Yet, if that period was marked by a romantic extravagance, and the preſent is diſtinguiſhed by an indolent ſelfiſhneſs, our ſuperiority is not ſo triumphantly deciſive, as, in the vanity of our hearts, we may be ready to imagine.

I do not wiſh to bring back the frantic reign of chivalry, nor to reinſtate women in that fantaſtic empire in which they then ſat enthroned in the hearts, or rather

in the imaginations of men. Common ſenſe is an excellent material of univerſal application, which the ſagacity of latter ages has ſeized upon, and rationally applied to the buſineſs of common life. But let us not forget, in the inſolence of acknowledged ſuperiority, that it was *religion* and *chaſtity*, operating on the romantic ſpirit of thoſe times, which eſtabliſhed the deſpotic ſway of woman; and though, in this altered ſcene of things, ſhe now no longer looks down on her adoring votaries from the pedeſtal to which an abſurd idolatry had lifted her; yet let her remember that it is the ſame religion and the ſame chaſtity which once raiſed her to ſuch an elevation, that muſt ſtill furniſh the nobleſt energies of her character; muſt ſtill attract the admiration, ſtill retain the reſpect of the other ſex.

While we lawfully ridicule the abſurdities which we have abandoned, let us not plume ourſelves on that ſpirit of novelty which glories in the oppoſite ex-

treme. If the manners of the period in queſtion were affected, and if the gallantry was unnatural, yet the tone of virtue was high; and let us remember that conſtancy, purity, and honour, are not ridiculous in themſelves, though they may unluckily be aſſociated with qualities which are ſo: and women of delicacy would do well to reflect, when deſcanting on thoſe exploded manners, how far it be decorous to deride with too broad a laugh, attachments which could ſubſiſt on remote gratifications; or groſsly to ridicule the taſte which led the admirer to ſacrifice pleaſure to reſpect, and inclination to honour; how far it be delicate to ſneer at that purity which made ſelf-denial a proof of affection; to call in queſtion the ſound underſtanding of him who preferred the fame of his miſtreſs to his own indulgence; to burleſque that antiquated refinement which conſidered dignity and reſerve as additional titles to affection and reverence.

We cannot but be ſtruck with the wonderful contraſt exhibited to our view, when we contemplate the oppoſite manners of the two periods in queſtion. In the former, all the flower of Europe ſmit with a delirious gallantry; all that was young, and noble, and brave, and great, with a fanatic frenzy, and prepoſterous contempt of danger, traverſed ſeas, and ſcaled mountains, and compaſſed a large portion of the globe, at the expence of eaſe, and fortune, and life, for the unprofitable project of reſcuing, by force of arms, from the hands of infidels, the ſepulchre of that Saviour, whom, *in the other period*, their poſterity would think it the height of fanaticiſm ſo much as to name in good company. That Saviour, whoſe altars they deſert, whoſe temples they neglect; and though in more than one country at leaſt they ſtill call themſelves by his name, yet too many, it is to be feared, contemn his precepts, ſtill more are aſhamed of his

doctrines,

doctrines, and not a few reject his sacrifice. Too many consider Christianity rather as a political than a religious distinction; too many claim the appellation of Christians, in mere opposition to that Democracy with which they conceive infidelity to be associated, rather than from an abhorrence of impiety for its own sake; too many deprecate the charge of irreligion, as the supposed badge of a reprobated party, more than on account of that moral corruption which is its inseparable concomitant.

On the other hand, in an age when inversion is the character of the day, the modern idea of improvement does not consist in altering, but extirpating. We do not reform, but subvert. We do not correct old systems, but demolish them; fancying that when every thing shall be new it will be perfect. Not to have been wrong, but to have been at all, is the crime. Existence is sin. Excellence is no longer considered as an experimental thing which is to grow gradually

dually out of obſervation and practice, and to be improved by the accumulating additions brought by the wiſdom of ſucceſſive ages. *Our wiſdom* is not a creature ſlowly brought, by ripening time and gradual growth, to perfection; but is an inſtantaneouſly created goddeſs, which ſtarts at once, full grown, mature, armed cap-à-pee, from the heads of our modern thunderers. Or rather, if I may change the alluſion, a perfect ſyſtem is *now* expected inevitably to ſpring ſpontaneouſly at once, like the fabled bird of Arabia, from the aſhes of its parent; and, like that, can receive its birth no other way but by the deſtruction of its predeceſſor.

Inſtead of clearing away what is redundant, pruning what is cumberſome, ſupplying what is defective, and amending what is wrong, we adopt the indefinite rage for radical reform of Jack, who, in altering Lord Peter's * coat, ſhewed his

* Swift's "Tale of a Tub."

zeal by crying out, "Tear away, brother "Martin, for the love of heaven; never "mind, ſo you do but tear away."

This tearing ſyſtem has unqueſtionably rent away ſome valuable parts of that ſtrong, rich, native ſtuff, which formed the ancient texture of Britiſh manners. That we have gained much I am perſuaded; that we have loſt nothing I dare not therefore affirm. But though it fairly exhibits a mark of our improved judgment to ridicule the fantaſtic notions of love and honour in the heroic ages; let us not rejoice that the ſpirit of generoſity in ſentiment, and of ardour in piety, the exuberancies of which were then ſo inconvenient, are now ſunk as unreaſonably low. That revolution of taſte and manners which the unparalleled wit and genius of Don Quixote ſo happily effected throughout all the poliſhed countries of Europe, by aboliſhing extravagancies the moſt abſurd and pernicious, was ſo far imperfect, that ſome virtues which he never meant to expoſe,

expoſe, unjuſtly fell into diſrepute with the abſurdities which he did: and it is become the turn of the preſent taſte inſeparably to attach in no ſmall degree that which is ridiculous that which is ſerious and heroic. Some modern works of wit have aſſiſted in bringing piety and ſome of the nobleſt virtues into contempt, by ſtudiouſly aſſociating them with oddity, childiſh ſimplicity, and ignorance of the world: and unneceſſary pains have been taked to extinguiſh that zeal and ardour, which, however liable to exceſs and error, are yet the ſpring of whatever is great and excellent in the human character. The novel of Cervantes is incomparable; the Tartuffe of Moliere is unequalled; but true generoſity and true religion will never loſe any thing of their intrinſic value, becauſe knight-errantry and hypocriſy are legitimate objects for ſatire.

But to return from this too long digreſſion, to the ſubject of female influence. Thoſe who have not watched the united

operation

operation of vanity and feeling on a youthful mind, will not conceive how much lefs formidable the ridicule of all his own fex will be to a very young man, than that of thofe women to whom he has been taught to look up as the arbiters of elegance. Such a youth, I doubt not, might be able to work himfelf up, by the force of genuine Chriftian principle, to fuch a pitch of true heroifm, as to refufe a challenge, (and it requires more real courage to refufe a challenge than to accept one,) who would yet be in danger of relapfing into the dreadful pufillanimity of the world, when he is told that no woman of fafhion will hereafter look on him but with contempt. While we have cleared away the rubbifh of the Gothic ages, it were to be wifhed we had not retained the moft criminal of all their inftitutions. Why chivalry fhould indicate a madman, while its leading object, the *fingle combat*, fhould defignate a gentleman, has not yet been explained. Nay, the plaufible ori-

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ginal motive is loſt, while the ſinful practice is continued; for the fighter of the duel no longer *pretends* to be a glorious redreſſer of the wrongs of ſtrangers; no longer conſiders himſelf as piouſly appealing to heaven for the juſtice of his cauſe; but from the ſlaviſh fear of unmerited reproach, often ſelfiſhly hazards the happineſs of his neareſt connections, and always comes forth in direct defiance of an acknowledged command of the Almighty. Perhaps there are few occaſions on which female influence might be exerted to a higher purpoſe than on this, in which laws and conſcience have hitherto effected ſo little. But while the duelliſt (who perhaps becomes a duelliſt only becauſe he was firſt a ſeducer) is welcomed with ſmiles; the more hardy dignified youth, who, not becauſe he fears man but God, declines a challenge; who is reſolved to brave diſgrace rather than commit ſin, would be treated with cool contempt by thoſe very perſons to whoſe eſteem he might

might reaſonably have looked, as one of the rewards of his true and ſubſtantial fortitude.

How then is it to be reconciled with the deciſions of principle, that delicate women ſhould receive with complacency the ſucceſsful libertine, who has been detected by the wretched father or the injured huſband in a criminal commerce, the diſcovery of which has too juſtly baniſhed the unhappy partner of his crime from virtuous ſociety? Nay, if he happens to be very handſome, or very brave, or very faſhionable, is there not ſometimes a kind of diſhonourable competition for his favour? Is there not a ſort of bad popularity attached to his attentions? But, whether his flattering reception be derived from birth, or parts, or perſon, or (what is often a ſubſtitute for all) from his having made his way into *good company*, women of diſtinction ſully the ſanctity of virtue by the too viſible pleaſure they ſometimes expreſs at the attentions of ſuch a popular libertine, whoſe voluble ſmall-talk they admire, whoſe ſprightly

ſprightly nothings they quote, whoſe vices they juſtify or extenuate, and whom perhaps their very favour tends to prevent from becoming a better character, becauſe he finds himſelf more acceptable as he is.

May I be allowed to introduce a new part of my ſubject, by remarking that it is a matter of inconceivable importance, though not perhaps ſufficiently conſidered, when any popular work, not on a religious topic, but on any common ſubject, ſuch as politics, hiſtory, or ſcience, has happened to be written by an author of ſound Chriſtian principles? It may not have been neceſſary, nor prudently practicable, to have a ſingle page in the whole work profeſſedly religious: but ſtill, when the living principle informs the mind of the writer, it is almoſt impoſſible but that ſomething of its ſpirit will diffuſe itſelf even into ſubjects with which it ſhould ſeem but remotely connected. It is at leaſt a comfort to the reader, to feel that honeſt confidence which reſults from knowing that he has put himſelf into

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ſafe hands; that he has committed himſelf to an author, whoſe known principles are a pledge that his reader need not be driven to watch himſelf at every ſtep with anxious circumſpection; that he need not be looking on the right hand and on the left, as if he knew there were pitfalls under the flowers which are delighting him. And it is no ſmall point gained, that on ſubjects in which you do not look to *improve* your religion, it is at leaſt ſecured from deterioration. If the Athenian Laws were ſo delicate that they diſgraced any one who ſhewed an inquiring traveller the wrong road, what diſgrace, among Chriſtians, ſhould attach to that author, who, when a youth, is inquiring the road to hiſtory or philoſophy, directs him to blaſphemy and unbelief*?

In

* The Author has often heard it mentioned as matter of regret, that Mr. Gibbon ſhould have blemiſhed his elegant hiſtory with the two notoriouſly offenſive chapters againſt Chriſtianity. But does not

In animadverting farther on the reigning evils which the times more particularly demand that women of rank and influence ſhould repreſs, Chriſtianity calls upon them to bear their decided teſtimony againſt every thing which is notoriouſly contributing to the public corruption. It calls upon them to baniſh from their dreſſing-rooms, (and oh, that their influence could baniſh from the libraries of their ſons and huſbands!)

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not this regret ſeem to imply that the work would, by this omiſſion, have been left ſafe and unexceptionable? May we not rather conſider theſe chapters as a fatal rock indeed; but as a rock enlightened by a beacon, fairly and unequivocally warning us of the ſurrounding perils.—To change the metaphor—Had not the miſchiefs of theſe chapters been rendered thus conſpicuous, the incautious reader would have been ſtill left expoſed to the fatal effects of the more diſguiſed poiſon which is infuſed through almoſt every part of the volumes. Is it not obvious that a ſpirit ſo virulent againſt revealed religion as theſe two chapters indicate, would be inceſſantly pouring out ſome of its infectious matter on every occaſion; and would even induſtriouſly make the opportunities which it did not find?

husbands !) that sober and unsuspected mass of mischief, which, by assuming the plausible names of Science, of Philosophy, of Arts, of Belles Lettres, is gradually administering death to the principles of those who would be on their guard, had the poison been labelled with its own pernicious title. Avowed attacks upon revelation are more easily resisted, because the malignity is advertised. But who suspects the destruction which lurks under the harmless or instructive names of *General History*, *Natural History*, *Travels*, *Voyages*, *Lives*, *Encyclopedias*, *Criticism*, and *Romance?* Who will deny that many of these works contain much admirable matter; brilliant passages, important facts, just descriptions, faithful pictures of nature, and valuable illustrations of science? But while "the dead fly lies at the bottom," the whole will exhale a corrupt and pestilential stench.

Novels, which chiefly ufed to be dangerous in one refpect, are now become mifchievous in a thoufand. They are continually fhifting their ground, and enlarging their fphere, and are daily becoming vehicles of wider mifchief. Sometimes they concentrate their force, and are at once employed to diffufe deftructive politics, deplorable profligacy, and impudent infidelity. Rouffeau was the firft popular difpenfer of this complicated drug, in which the deleterious infufion was ftrong, and the effect proportionably fatal. For he does not attempt to feduce the affections but through the medium of the principles. He does not paint an innocent woman ruined, repenting, and reftored; but with a far more mifchievous refinement, he annihilates the value of chaftity, and with pernicious fubtlety attempts to make his heroine appear almoft more amiable without it. He exhibits a virtuous woman, the victim not of temptation, but of

of reaſon—not of vice, but of ſentiment—not of paſſion, but of conviction; and ſtrikes at the very root of honour, by elevating a crime into a principle. With a metaphyſical ſophiſtry, the moſt plauſible, he debauches the heart of woman, by cheriſhing her vanity in the erection of a ſyſtem of male virtues, to which, with a lofty dereliction of thoſe that are her more peculiar and characteriſtic praiſe, he tempts her to aſpire; powerfully inſinuating, that to this ſplendid ſyſtem chaſtity does not neceſſarily belong: thus corrupting the judgment, and bewildering the underſtanding, as the moſt effectual way to inflame the imagination and deprave the heart.

The rare miſchief of this author, conſiſts in his power of ſeducing by falſehood thoſe who love truth, but whoſe minds are ſtill wavering, and whoſe principles are not yet formed. He allures the warm-hearted to embrace vice, not becauſe they prefer vice, but becauſe he gives to vice ſo

 natural

natural an air of virtue: and ardent and enthusiastic youth, too confidently trusting in their integrity and in their teacher, will be undone, while they fancy they are indulging in the noblest feelings of their nature. Many authors will more infallibly complete the ruin of the loose and ill-disposed: but perhaps there never was a net of such exquisite art, and inextricable workmanship, spread to entangle innocence, and ensnare inexperience, as the writings of Rousseau: and, unhappily, the victim does not even struggle in the toils, because part of the delusion consists in his imagining that he is set at liberty.

Some of our recent popular publications have adopted and enlarged all the mischiefs of this school; and the principal evil arising from them is, that the virtues they exhibit are almost more dangerous than the vices. The chief materials out of which these delusive systems are framed, are characters who practise superfluous acts of generosity, while

while they are trampling on obvious and commanded duties; who combine inflated ſentiments of honour with actions the moſt flagitious; a high tone of ſelf-confidence, with a perpetual neglect of ſelf-denial: pathetic apoſtrophes to the paſſions, but no attempt to reſiſt them. They teach, that chaſtity is only individual attachment; that no duty exiſts which is not prompted by feeling; that impulſe is the main ſpring of virtuous actions, while laws and religion are only unjuſt reſtraints; the former impoſed by arbitrary men, the latter by the abſurd prejudices of timorous and unenlightened conſcience. Alas! they do not know that the beſt creature of impulſe that ever lived, is but a wayward, unfixed, unprincipled being! That the beſt *natural* man requires a curb; and needs that balance to the affections which Chriſtianity alone can furniſh, and without which benevolent propenſities are no ſecurity to virtue. And perhaps it is not too much to ſay, in

ſpite of the monopoly of benevolence to which the new philoſophy lays claim, that the *human* duties of the ſecond table have never once been well performed by any of the rejectors of that previous portion of the Decalogue which enjoins duty to *God.*

In ſome of the moſt ſplendid of theſe characters compaſſion is erected into the throne of juſtice, and juſtice degraded into the rank of plebeian virtues. It is conſidered as a noble exemplification of ſentiment that creditors ſhould be defrauded, while the money due to them is laviſhed in dazzling acts of charity to ſome object that affects the ſenſes; which paroxyſms of charity are made the ſponge of every ſin, and the ſubſtitute of every virtue: the whole indirectly tending to intimate how very *benevolent people are who are not Chriſtians.* From many of theſe compoſitions, indeed, Chriſtianity is ſyſtematically, and always virtually, excluded; for the law, and the prophets, and the goſpel,

can make no part of a ſcheme in which this world is looked upon as all in all; in which want and miſery are conſidered as evils ariſing ſolely from the defects of human governments, and not as making part of the diſpenſations of God; in which poverty is repreſented as merely a political evil, and the reſtraints which tend to keep the poor honeſt, are painted as the moſt flagrant injuſtice. The goſpel *can* make no part of a ſyſtem in which the abſurd idea of perfectibility is conſidered as applicable to fallen creatures; in which the chimerical project of conſummate earthly happineſs (founded on the mad pretence of loving the poor better than God loves them) would defeat the divine plan, which meant this world for a ſcene of diſcipline, not of remuneration. The goſpel *can* have nothing to do with a ſyſtem in which ſin is reduced to a little human imperfection, and Old Bailey crimes are ſoftened down into a few engaging weak-

 neſſes;

nesses; and in which the turpitude of all the vices a man himself commits, is done away by his *candour* in tolerating all the vices committed by others *.

But the part of the system the most fatal to that class whom I am addressing is, that even in those works which do not go all the length of treating marriage as an unjust infringement on liberty, and a tyrannical deduction from general happiness; yet it commonly happens that the hero or heroine, who has practically violated the letter of the seventh commandment, and continues to live in the allowed violation of its spirit, is painted as so amiable and so benevolent, so tender or so brave; and the

* It is to be lamented that some, even of those more virtuous novel writers, who *intend* to espouse the cause of religion, yet exhibit such false views of it. I have lately seen a work of some merit in this way, which was meritoriously designed to expose the impieties of the new philosophy. But the writer betrayed his own imperfect knowledge of the christianity he was defending, by making his hero, whom he proposed as a pattern, *fight a duel!*

the temptation is reprefented as fo *irre-fiftible*, (for all thefe philofophers are fatalifts,) the predominant and cherifhed fin is fo filtered and defecated of its pollutions, and is fo fheltered and furrounded, and relieved with fhining qualities, that the innocent and impreffible young reader is brought to lofe all horror of the awful crime in queftion, in the complacency fhe feels for the engaging virtues of the criminal.

There is another object to which I would direct the exertion of that power of female influence of which I am fpeaking. Thofe ladies who take the lead in fociety, are loudly called upon to act as the guardians of the public tafte, as well as of the public virtue. They are called upon, therefore, to oppofe with the whole weight of their influence, the irruption of thofe fwarms of publications now daily iffuing from the banks of the Danube, which, like their ravaging predeceffors of the darker ages, though with far other and more fatal arms,

are overrunning civilized ſociety. Thoſe readers, whoſe purer taſte has been formed on the correct models of the old claſſic ſchool, ſee with indignation and aſtoniſhment the Huns and Vandals once more overpowering the Greeks and Romans. They behold our minds, with a retrograde but rapid motion, hurried back to the reign of "chaos and old night," by diſtorted and unprincipled compoſitions, which, in ſpite of ſtrong flaſhes of genius, unite the taſte of the Goths with the morals of Bagſhot* ;

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire !

Theſe compoſitions terrify the weak, and amaze and enchant the idle ; while they diſguſt the diſcerning, by wild and miſ-ſhapen ſuperſtitions, in which, with that *conſiſtency* which forms ſo ſtriking a feature of the new philoſophy, thoſe who moſt earneſtly

* The newſpapers announce that Schiller's Tragedy of the Robbers, which inflamed the young nobility of Germany to enliſt themſelves into a band of highwaymen to rob in the foreſts of Bohemia, is *now acting in England by perſons of quality !*

earneſtly deny the immortality of the ſoul, are moſt eager to introduce the machinery of ghoſts.

The writings of the French infidels were ſome years ago circulated in England with uncommon induſtry, and with ſome effect: but the plain ſenſe and good principles of the far greater part of our countrymen, reſiſted the attack, and roſe ſuperior to the trial. Of the doctrines and principles here alluded to, the dreadful conſequences, not only in the unhappy country where they originated, and were almoſt univerſally adopted, but in every part of Europe where they have been received, have been ſuch as to ſerve as a beacon to ſurrounding nations, if any warning can preſerve them from deſtruction. In this country the ſubject is now ſo well underſtood, that every thing that iſſues from the *French* preſs is received with jealouſy; and a work, on the firſt appearance of its exhibiting the doctrines

doctrines of Voltaire and his aſſociates, is rejected with indignation.

But let us not on account of this victory repoſe in confident ſecurity. The modern apoſtles of infidelity and immorality, little leſs indefatigable in diſperſing their pernicious doctrines than the firſt apoſtles were in propagating goſpel truths, have indeed changed their weapons, but they have by no means deſiſted from the attack. To deſtroy the principles of Chriſtianity in this iſland,* appears at the preſent moment to be their grand aim. Deprived of the aſſiſtance of the French preſs, they are now attempting to attain their object under the cloſe and more artificial veil of German literature. Conſcious that religion and morals will ſtand or fall together, their attacks are ſometimes levelled againſt the one, and ſometimes againſt the other. With ſtrong occaſional profeſſions of general attachment to both of theſe, they

endeavour

endeavour to intereſt the feelings of the reader, ſometimes in favour of ſome one particular vice, at other times on the ſubject of ſome one objection to revealed religion. Poetry as well as proſe, romance as well as hiſtory, writings on philoſophical as well as on political ſubjects, have thus been employed to inſtil the principles of *Illuminiſm*, while incredible pains have been taken to obtain able tranſlations of every book which was ſuppoſed likely to be of uſe in corrupting the heart or miſleading the underſtanding. In many of theſe tranſlations, certain bolder paſſages, which, though well received in Germany, would have excited diſguſt in England, are wholly omitted, in order that the mind may be more certainly, though more ſlowly, prepared for the full effect of the ſame poiſon to be adminiſtered in a ſtronger degree at another period.

Let not thoſe to whom theſe pages are addreſſed deceive themſelves, by ſuppoſing

this

this to be a fable; and let them inquire moſt ſerioufly whether I ſpeak truth, in aſſerting that the attacks of infidelity in Great Britain are at this moment principally directed againſt the female breaſt. Conſcious of the influence of women in civil ſociety, conſcious of the effect which female infidelity produced in France, they attribute the ill-ſucceſs of their attempts in this country to their having been hitherto chiefly addreſſed to the male ſex. They are now ſeduloufly labouring to deſtroy the religious principles of women, and in too many inſtances have fatally ſucceeded. For this purpoſe, not only novels and romances have been made the vehicles of vice and infidelity, but the ſame allurement has been held out to the women of our country, which was employed by the firſt philoſophiſts to the firſt ſinner—Knowledge. Liſten to the precepts of the new German enlighteners, and you need no longer remain in that ſituation in which

Providence has placed you! Follow their examples, and you ſhall be permitttd to indulge in all thoſe gratifications which cuſtom, not religion, has tolerated in the male ſex!

Let us jealouſly watch every deepening ſhade in the change of manners; let us mark every ſtep, however inconſiderable, whoſe tendency is downwards. Corruption is neither ſtationary nor retrograde; and to have departed from modeſty, ſimplicity, and truth, is already to have made a progreſs. It is not only awfully true, that ſince the new principles have been afloat, *women* have been too eagerly inquiſitive after theſe monſtrous compoſitions; but it is true alſo that, with a new and offenſive renunciation of their native delicacy, *many women of character* make little heſitation in avowing their familiarity with works abounding with principles, ſentiments, and deſcriptions, "which ſhould not be ſo "much as named among them." By al-

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lowing their minds to come in contact with ſuch contagious matter, they are irrecoverably tainting them; and by acknowledging that they are actually converſant with ſuch corruptions, (with whatever reprobation of the author they may qualify their peruſal of the book,) they are exciting in others a moſt miſchievous curioſity for the ſame unhallowed gratification. Thus they are daily diminiſhing in the young and the timid thoſe wholeſome ſcruples, by which, when a tender conſcience ceaſes to be intrenched, all the ſubſequent ſtages of ruin are gradually facilitated.

We have hitherto ſpoken only of the German *writings;* but becauſe there are multitudes who ſeldom read, equal pains have been taken to promote the ſame object through the medium of the ſtage: and this weapon is, of all others, that againſt which it is, at the preſent moment, the moſt important to warn the more inconſiderate of my countrywomen.

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As a ſpecimen of the German drama, it may not be unſeaſonable to offer a few remarks on the admired play of the *Stranger*. In this piece the character of an *adultreſs*, which, in all periods of the world, ancient as well as modern, in all countries, heathen as well as chriſtian, has hitherto been held in deteſtation, and has never been introduced but to be reprobated, is for the firſt time preſented to our view in the moſt pleaſing and faſcinating colours. The heroine is a woman who forſook a huſband the moſt affectionate and the moſt amiable, and lived for ſome time in a criminal commerce with her ſeducer. Repenting at length of her crime, ſhe buries herſelf in retirement. The talents of the poet during the whole piece are exerted in attempting to render this woman the object not only of the compaſſion and forgiveneſs, but of the eſteem and affection of the audience. The injured huſband, convinced of his wife's repent-

 ance,

ance, forms a refolution, which every man of true feeling and chriftian piety will probably approve. He forgives her offence, and promifes her through life his advice, protection, and fortune, together with every thing which can alleviate the mifery of her condition, but refufes to replace her in the fituation of his wife. But this is not fufficient for the *German* author. His efforts are employed, and it is to be feared but too fuccefsfully, in making the audience confider the hufband as an unrelenting favage, while they are led by the art of the poet anxioufly to wifh to fee an adultrefs reftored to that rank of women who have not violated the moft folemn covenant that can be made with man, nor difobeyed one of the moft pofitive laws which has been enjoined by God.

About the fame time that this firft attempt at reprefenting an adultrefs in an exemplary light was made by a German dramatift, which forms an æra in manners,

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a direct vindication of adultery was, for the first time, attempted by a *woman*, a professed admirer and imitator of the German suicide Werter. *The Female Werter*, as she is styled by her biographer, asserts, in a work intitled, "The Wrongs of "Women," that adultery is justifiable, and that the restrictions placed on it by the laws of England, constitute one of the *Wrongs of Women*.

This leads me to dwell a little longer on this most destructive class in the whole wide range of modern corrupters, who effect the most desperate work of the passions, without so much as pretending to urge their violence in extenuation of the guilt of indulging them. They solicit this very indulgence with a sort of cold-blooded speculation, and invite the reader to the most unbounded gratifications, with all the saturnine coolness of a geometrical calculation. Theirs is an iniquity rather of phlegm than of spirit: and in the pestilent at-

moſphere they raiſe about them, as in the infernal climate deſcribed by Milton—

The parching air*
Burns frore, and froſt performs th' effects of fire.

This cool, calculating, intellectual wickedneſs eats out the very heart and core of virtue, and like a deadly mildew blights and ſhrivels the blooming promiſe of the human ſpring. Its benumbing touch communicates a torpid ſluggiſhneſs which paralyzes the ſoul. It deſcants on depravity as gravely, and details its groſſeſt acts as frigidly, as if its object were to *allay* the tumult of the paſſions, while it is letting them looſe on mankind, by "plucking off "the muzzle" of preſent reſtraint and future accountableneſs. The ſyſtem is a dire infuſion, compounded of bold impiety, brutiſh ſenſuality, and exquiſite folly, which creeping fatally about the heart, checks the moral circulation, and totally

* "When the north wind bloweth it devoureth "the mountains, and burneth the wilderneſs, and "conſumeth the graſs as fire." Ecclus. xl. 20.

ſtops

ſtops the pulſe of goodneſs by the extinction of the vital principle: thus not only choaking the ſtream of actual virtue, but drying up the very fountain of future remorſe and remote repentance.

The ravages which ſome of the old offenders againſt purity made in the youthful heart, by the exerciſe of a fervid but licentious imagination on the paſſions, reſembled the miſchief effected by floods, cataracts, and volcanos. The deſolation indeed was terrible, and the ruin was tremendous: yet it was a ruin which did not *infallibly* preclude the poſſibility of recovery. The country, though deluged and devaſtated, was not utterly put beyond the power of reſtoration. The harveſts indeed were deſtroyed, and all was wide ſterility. But though the crops were loſt, the *ſeeds* of vegetation were not abſolutely eradicated; ſo that, after a long and barren blank, fertility *might* finally return.

But the heart once infected with this newly medicated venom, ſubtil though ſluggiſh in its operation, reſembles what travellers relate of that blaſted ſpot the dead ſea, where thoſe devoted cities once ſtood which for their pollutions were burnt with fire from heaven. It continues a ſtagnant lake of putrifying waters. No wholeſome blade evermore ſhoots up; the air is ſo tainted that no living thing ſubſiſts within its influence. Near the ſulphureous pool the very principle of being is annihilated.—All is death,

Death, unrepealable, eternal death!

But let us take comfort. Theſe projects are not yet generally realiſed. Theſe atrocious principles are not yet adopted into common practice. Though corruptions ſeem with a confluent tide to be pouring in upon us from every quarter, yet there is ſtill left among us a diſcriminating judgment. Clear and ſtrongly marked diſ-

tinctions between right and wrong still subsist. While we continue to cherish this sanity of mind, the case is not desperate. Though that crime, the growth of which always exhibits the most irrefragable proof of the dissoluteness of public manners; though that crime, which cuts up order and virtue by the roots, and violates the sanctity of vows, is awfully increasing,

> 'Till senates seem,
> For purposes of empire less conven'd
> Than to release the adult'ress from her bonds;

yet, thanks to the surviving efficacy of a holy religion, to the operation of virtuous laws, and to the energy and unshaken integrity with which these laws are *now* administered; and, most of all perhaps, to a standard of morals which continues in force, when the principles which sanctioned it are no more; this crime, in the female sex at least, is still held in just abhorrence. If it be practised, it is not honourable; if it be committed, it is not justified; we do

not yet affect to palliate its turpitude; as yet it hides its abhorred head in lurking privacy; and reprobation *hitherto* follows its publicity.

But on YOUR exerting your influence, with just application and increasing energy, may, in no small degree, depend whether this corruption shall still continue to be resisted. For the abhorrence of a practice will too probably diminish, of which the theory is perused with enthusiasm. From admiring to adopting, the step is short, and the progress rapid; and it is in the moral as in the natural world; the motion, in the case of minds as well as of bodies, is accelerated as they approach the centre to which they are tending.

O ye to whom this address is particularly directed! an awful charge is, in this instance, committed to your hands; as you discharge it or shrink from it, you promote or injure the honour of your

your daughters and the happineſs of your ſons, of both which you are the depoſitaries. And, while you reſolutely perſevere in making a ſtand againſt the encroachments of this crime, ſuffer not your firmneſs to be ſhaken by that affectation of charity which is growing into a general ſubſtitute for principle. Abuſe not ſo noble a quality as Chriſtian candour, by miſemploying it in inſtances to which it does not apply. Pity the wretched woman you dare not countenance; and bleſs HIM who has "made "you to differ." If unhappily ſhe be your relation or friend, anxiouſly watch for the period when ſhe ſhall be deſerted by her betrayer; and ſee if, by your Chriſtian offices, ſhe can be ſnatched from a perpetuity of vice. But if, through the Divine bleſſing on your patient endeavours, ſhe ſhould ever be awakened to remorſe, be not anxious to reſtore the forlorn penitent to that ſociety againſt whoſe laws ſhe has ſo grievouſly offended; and remember,

member, that her ſoliciting ſuch a reſtoration, furniſhes but too plain a proof that ſhe is not the penitent your partiality would believe; ſince penitence is more anxious to make its peace with Heaven than with the world. Joyfully would a truly contrite ſpirit commute an earthly for an everlaſting reprobation! To reſtore a criminal to public ſociety, is perhaps to tempt her to repeat her crime, or to deaden her repentance for having committed it, as well as to inſult and to injure that ſociety; while to reſtore a ſtrayed ſoul to God will add luſtre to your Chriſtian character, and brighten your eternal crown.

In the meantime, there are other evils, ultimately perhaps tending to this, into which we are falling, through that ſort of faſhionable candour which, as was hinted above, is among the miſchievous characteriſtics of the preſent day; of which period perhaps it is not the ſmalleſt evil, that vices are made to look ſo like virtues, and are ſo aſſimilated to them, that it requires watch-

fulneſs

fulneſs and judgment ſufficiently to analyze and diſcriminate. There are certain women of good faſhion who practiſe irregularities not conſiſtent with the ſtrictneſs of virtue; while their good ſenſe and knowledge of the world make them at the ſame time keenly alive to the value of reputation. They want to retain their indulgences, without quite forfeiting their credit; but finding their fame faſt declining, they artfully cling, by flattery and marked attentions, to a few perſons of more than ordinary character; and thus, till they are driven to let go their hold, continue to prop a falling fame.

On the other hand, there are not wanting women of diſtinction of very correct general conduct, and of no ordinary ſenſe and virtue, who, confiding with a high mind on what they too confidently call *the integrity of their own hearts;* anxious to deſerve a good fame on the one hand, by a life free from reproach, yet ſecretly too deſirous on the other of

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ſecuring a worldly and faſhionable reputation; while their general aſſociates are perſons of honour, and their general reſort places of ſafety; yet allow themſelves to be occaſionally preſent at the midnight orgies of revelry and gaming, in houſes of no honourable eſtimation; and thus help to keep up characters, which, without their ſuſtaining hand, would ſink to their juſt level of contempt and reprobation. While they are holding out this plank to a drowning reputation, rather, it is to be feared, ſhewing their own ſtrength than aſſiſting another's weakneſs, they value themſelves, perhaps, on not partaking of the worſt parts of the amuſements which may be carrying on; but they ſanction them by their preſence; they lend their countenance to corruptions they ſhould abhor, and their example to the young and inexperienced, who are looking about for ſome ſuch ſanction to juſtify them in that to which they were before inclined,

but

but were too timid to have ventured upon without the protection of such unsullied names. Thus these respectable characters, without looking to the general consequences of their indiscretion, are thoughtlessly employed in breaking down, as it were, the broad fence which should ever separate two very different sorts of society, and are becoming a kind of unnatural link between vice and virtue.

There is a gross deception which even persons of reputation practise on themselves. They loudly condemn vice and irregularity as an abstract principle; nay, they stigmatize them in persons of an opposite party, or in those from whom they themselves have no prospect of personal advantage or amusement, and in whom therefore they have no particular interest to tolerate evil. But the same disorders are viewed without abhorrence when practised by those who in any way minister to *their* pleasures. Refined entertainments, luxurious decorations, select music, what-

ever furnishes any delight rare and exquisite to the senses, these soften the severity of criticism; these palliate sins, these varnish over the flaws of a broken character, and extort not pardon merely, but justification, countenance, intimacy! The more respectable will not, perhaps, go all the length of vindicating the disreputable vice, but they affect to disbelieve its existence in the individual instance; or, failing in this, they will bury its acknowledged turpitude in the seducing qualities of the agreeable delinquent. Talents of every kind are considered as a commutation for a few vices; and such talents are made a passport to introduce into honourable society characters whom their profligacy ought to exclude from it.

But the great object to which YOU, who are or may be mothers, are more especially called, is the education of your children. If we are responsible for the use of influence in the case of those over whom we have no immediate control, in the

the caſe of our children we are reſponſible for the exerciſe of acknowledged *power:* a power wide in its extent, indefinite in its effects, and ineſtimable in its importance. On YOU depend in no ſmall degree the principles of the whole riſing generation. To your direction the daughters are almoſt excluſively committed; and until a certain age, to you alſo is conſigned the mighty privilege of forming the hearts and minds of your infant ſons. To YOU is made over the awfully important truſt of infuſing the firſt principles of piety into the tender minds of thoſe who may one day be called to inſtruct, not families merely, but diſtricts; to influence, not individuals, but ſenates. Your private exertions may at this moment be contributing to the future happineſs, your domeſtic neglect, to the future ruin, of your country. And may you never forget, in this your early inſtruction of your offspring, nor they, in their future application of it, that religion is the only ſure ground of morals; that private

private principle is the only ſolid baſis of public virtue. O think that they both may be fixed or forfeited forever according to the uſe you are now making of that power which God has delegated to you, and of which he will demand a ſtrict account. By his bleſſing on your pious labours may both ſons and daughters hereafter "arise and call you bleſſed." And in the great day of general account, may every Chriſtian mother be enabled through divine grace to ſay, with humble confidence, to her Maker and Redeemer, "Behold the children whom thou haſt "given me!"

Chriſtianity, driven out from the reſt of the world, has ſtill, bleſſed be God! a "ſtrong hold" in this country. And though it be the ſpecial duty of the appointed "watchman, *now* that he ſeeth "the ſword come upon the land, to "blow the trumpet and warn the people, "which if he neglect to do, their blood "ſhall be required of the watchman's

"hand*: yet, in this facred garrifon, *impregnable but by neglect*, YOU too have an awful poft, that of arming the minds of the rifing race with the "fhield of "faith, whereby they fhall be able to "quench the fiery darts of the wicked;" "that of girding them with that fword "of the Spirit which is the word of God." Let that very period which is defecrated in a neighbouring country, by a formal renunciation of religion, be folemnly marked by YOU to purpofes diametrically oppofite. Let that dishonoured æra in which *they* avowed their refolution to exclude Chriftianity from the national education, be the precife moment feized upon by YOU for its more fedulous inculcation. And while *their* children are fyftematically trained to "live without God in the "world," let YOURS, with a more decided emphafis, be confecrated to promote his glory in it!

* Ezekiel, xxxiii. 6.

If you neglect this your bounden duty, you will have effectually contributed to expel Chriſtianity from her laſt citadel. And remember, that the dignity of the work to which you are called, is no leſs than that of "preſerving the ark of the "Lord."

CHAP. II.

On the education of women.—The prevailing ſyſtem tends to eſtabliſh the errors which it ought to correct.—Dangers ariſing from an exceſſive cultivation of the arts.

IT is far from being the object of this ſlight work to offer a regular plan of female education, a taſk which has been often more properly aſſumed by far abler writers; but it is intended rather to ſuggeſt a few remarks on the reigning mode, which, though it has had many panegyriſts, appears to be defective, not only in certain particulars, but as a general ſyſtem. There are indeed numberleſs honourable exceptions to an obſervation which will be thought ſevere; yet the author would aſk, whether it be not the natural tendency of the prevailing and popular mode to excite and promote thoſe very evils which it ought to be the main end and object of

Chriſtian inſtruction to remove? whether the reigning ſyſtem does not tend to weaken the principles it ought to ſtrengthen, and to diſſolve the heart it ſhould fortify? whether, inſtead of directing the grand and important engine of education to attack and deſtroy *vanity, ſelfiſhneſs, and inconſideration,* that triple alliance in ſtrict and conſtant league againſt female virtue; the combined powers of inſtruction are not ſeduloufly confederated in confirming their ſtrength and eſtabliſhing their empire?

If indeed the *material* ſubſtance; if the body and limbs, with the organs and ſenſes, be really the more valuable objects of attention, then there is little room for animadverſion and improvement: but if the immaterial and immortal mind; if the heart, "out of which are the iſſues of life," be the main concern; if the great buſineſs of education be to implant right ideas, to communicate uſeful knowledge, to form a correct taſte and a ſound judgment, to reſiſt evil propenſities, and above all to ſeize

ſeize the favourable ſeaſon for infuſing principles and confirming habits; if education be a ſchool to fit us for life, and life be a ſchool to fit us for eternity; if ſuch, I repeat it, be the chief work and grand ends of education, it may then be worth inquiring how far theſe ends are likely to be effected by the prevailing ſyſtem.

Is it not a fundamental error to conſider children as innocent beings, whoſe little weakneſſes may perhaps want ſome correction, rather than as beings who bring into the world a corrupt nature and evil diſpoſitions, which it ſhould be the great end of education to rectify? This appears to be ſuch a foundation-truth, that if I were aſked what quality is moſt important in an inſtructor of youth, I ſhould not heſitate to reply, *ſuch a ſtrong impreſſion of the corruption of our nature, as ſhould inſure a diſpoſition to counteract it; together with ſuch a deep view and thorough knowledge of the human heart, as ſhould be neceſſary for developing and controlling its*

most secret and complicated workings. And let us remember that to *know the world*, as it is called, that is, to know its local manners, temporary usages, and evanescent fashions, is not to *know human nature*: and that where this prime knowledge is wanting, those natural evils which ought to be counteracted will be fostered.

Vanity, for instance, is reckoned among the light and venial errors of youth; nay, so far from being treated as a dangerous enemy, it is often called in as an auxiliary. At worst, it is considered as a harmless weakness, which subtracts little from the value of a character; as a natural effervescence, which will subside of itself, when the first ferment of the youthful passions shall have done working. But those persons know little of the conformation of the human and especially of the female heart, who fancy that vanity is ever exhausted, by the mere operation of time and events. Let those who maintain this opinion look into our places of public resort, and there be-

hold

hold if the ghoſt of departed beauty is not to its laſt flitting, fond of haunting the ſcenes of its paſt pleaſures. The ſoul, unwilling (if I may borrow an alluſion from the Platonic mythology) to quit the ſpot in which the body enjoyed its former delights, ſtill continues to hover about the ſame place, though the ſame pleaſures are no longer to be found there. Diſappointments indeed may divert vanity into a new direction; prudence may prevent it from breaking out into exceſſes, and age may prove that it is "vexation of ſpirit;" but neither diſappointment, prudence, nor age can *cure* it; for they do not correct the principle. Nay, the very diſappointment itſelf ſerves as a painful evidence of its protracted exiſtence.

Since then there is a ſeaſon when the youthful muſt ceaſe to be young, and the beautiful to excite admiration; to learn how to grow old gracefully is perhaps one of the rareſt and moſt valuable arts which can be taught to woman. And it muſt be confeſſed

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it is a moſt ſevere trial for thoſe women to be called to lay down beauty, who have nothing elſe to take up. It is for this ſober ſeaſon of life that education ſhould lay up its rich reſources. However diſregarded they may hitherto have been, they will be wanted now. When admirers fall away, and flatterers become mute, the mind will be driven to retire into itſelf, and if it find no entertainment at home, it will be driven back again upon the world with increaſed force. Yet forgetting this, do we not ſeem to educate our daughters, excluſively, for the tranſient period of youth, when it is to maturer life we ought to advert? Do we not educate them for a crowd, forgetting that they are to live at home? for the world, and not for themſelves? for ſhow, and not for uſe? for time, and not for eternity?

Vanity (and the ſame may be ſaid of ſelfiſhneſs) is not to be reſiſted like any other vice, which is ſometimes buſy and ſometimes quiet; it is not to be attacked as a ſingle fault, which is indulged in

oppoſition

opposition to a single virtue; but it is uniformly to be controlled, as an active, a restless, a growing principle, at constant war with all the Christian graces; which not only mixes itself with all our faults, but insinuates itself into all our virtues too; and will, if not checked effectually, rob our best actions of their reward. Vanity, if I may use the analogy, is, with respect to the other vices, what feeling is in regard to the other senses; it is not confined in its operation to the eye, or the ear, or any single organ, but is diffused through the whole being, alive in every part, awakened and communicated by the slightest touch.

Not a few of the evils of the present day arise from a new and perverted application of terms: among these, perhaps, there is not one more abused, misunderstood, or misapplied, than the term *accomplishments*. This word in its original meaning signifies *completeness*, *perfection*. But I may safely appeal to the observation of mankind, whether

whether they do not meet with ſwarms of youthful females, iſſuing from our boarding ſchools, as well as emerging from the more private ſcenes of domeſtic education, who are introduced into the world, under the broad and univerſal title of *accompliſhed young ladies*, of *all* of whom it cannot very truly and correctly be pronounced, that they illuſtrate the definition, by a completeneſs which leaves nothing to be added, and a perfection which leaves nothing to be deſired.

This phrenzy of accompliſhments, unhappily, is no longer reſtricted within the uſual limits of rank and fortune; the middle orders have caught the contagion, and it rages downward with increaſing and deſtructive violence, from the elegantly dreſſed but ſlenderly portioned curate's daughter, to the equally faſhionable daughter of the little tradeſman, and of the more opulent but not more judicious farmer. And is it not obvious, that as far as this

epidemical

epidemical mania has ſpread, this very valuable part of ſociety is declining in uſefulneſs, as it riſes in its ill-founded pretenſions to elegance? till this rapid revolution of the manners of the midle claſs has ſo far altered the character of the age, as to be in danger of rendering obſolete the heretofore common ſaying, "that moſt worth and "virtue are to be found in the middle ſta-"tion." For I do not ſcruple to aſſert, that in general, as far as my little obſervation has extended, this claſs of females, in what relates both to religious knowledge and to practical induſtry, falls ſhort both of the very high and the very low. Their new courſe of education, and the indolent habits of life and elegance of dreſs connected with it, peculiarly unfits them for the active duties of their own very important condition; while, with frivolous eagerneſs, and ſecond-hand opportunities, they run to ſnatch a few of thoſe ſhowy acquirements which decorate the great.

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This is done apparently with one or other of theſe views; either to make their fortune by marriage, or if that fail, to qualify them to become teachers of others: hence the abundant multiplication of ſuperficial wives, and of incompetent and illiterate governeſſes. The uſe of the pencil, the performance of exquiſite but unneceſſary works, the ſtudy of foreign languages and of muſic, require (with ſome exceptions which ſhould always be made in favour of great natural genius) a degree of leiſure which belongs excluſively to affluence *. One uſe of learning languages is, not that we may know what the terms which expreſs the articles of our dreſs and our table are called in French or Italian; nor that we may think over a few ordinary phraſes in Engliſh, and then tranſlate them, without one foreign idiom; for he who cannot

think

* Thoſe among the claſs in queſtion, whoſe own good ſenſe leads them to avoid theſe miſtaken purſuits, cannot be offended at a reproof which does not belong to them.

think in a language cannot be said to understand it: but the great use of acquiring any foreign language is, either that it enables us occasionally to converse with foreigners, unacquainted with any other, or that it is a key to the literature of the country to which it belongs. Now those humbler females, the chief part of whose time is required for domestic offices, are little likely to fall in the way of foreigners; and so far from enjoying opportunities for the acquisition of foreign literature, they have seldom time to possess themselves of much of that valuable knowledge which the books of their own country so abundantly furnish; and the acquisition of which would be so much more useful and honourable than the paltry accessions they make, by hammering out the meaning of a few passages in a tongue they but imperfectly understand, and of which they are never likely to make any use.

It would be well if the reflection how eagerly this redundancy of accomplishments is seized on by their inferiors, were to operate as in the case of other absurd fashions; the rich and great being seldom brought to renounce any mode or custom, from the mere consideration that it is preposterous, or that it is wrong; while they are frightened into its immediate relinquishment, from the pressing consideration that the *vulgar* are beginning to adopt it.

But, to return to that more elevated, and, on account of their more extended influence only, that more important class of females, to whose use this little work is more immediately dedicated. Some popular authors, on the subject of female instruction, had for a time established a fantastic code of artificial manners. They had refined elegance into insipidity, frittered down delicacy into frivolousness, and reduced manner into *minauderie*. "But to

"lisp, and to amble, and to nick-name "God's creatures," has nothing to do with true gentleneſs of mind; and to be ſilly makes no neceſſary part of ſoftneſs. Another claſs of cotemporary authors turned all the force of their talents to excite *emotions*, to inſpire *ſentiment*, and to reduce all mental and moral excellence into *ſympathy* and *feeling*. Theſe ſofter qualities were elevated at the expence of principle; and young women were inceſſantly hearing unqualified ſenſibility extolled as the perfection of their nature; till thoſe who really poſſeſſed this amiable quality, inſtead of directing, and chaſtiſing, and reſtraining it, were in danger of foſtering it to their hurt, and began to conſider themſelves as deriving their excellence from its exceſs; while thoſe leſs intereſting damſels, who happened not to find any of this amiable ſenſibility in their *hearts*, but thought it creditable to have it ſomewhere, fancied its ſeat was in the *nerves*; and here indeed

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it was easily found or feigned; till a false and excessive display of feeling became so predominant, as to bring in question the actual existence of that true tenderness, without which, though a woman may be worthy, she can never be amiable.

Fashion then, by one of her sudden and rapid turns, instantaneously struck out both real sensibility and the affectation of it from the standing list of female perfections; and, by a quick touch of her magic wand, shifted the scene, and at once produced the bold and independent beauty, the intrepid female, the hoyden, the huntress, and the archer; the swinging arms, the confident address, the regimental, and the four-in-hand. Such self-complacent heroines made us ready to regret their softer predecessors, who had aimed only at *pleasing* the other sex, while these aspiring fair ones struggled for the bolder renown of *rivalling* them; the project failed; for, whereas the former had sued for

for admiration, the latter challenged, ſeized, compelled it; but the men, as was natural, continued to prefer the more modeſt claimant to the ſturdy competitor.

It would be well if we, who have the advantage of contemplating the errors of the two extremes, were to look for truth where ſhe is commonly to be found, in the plain and obvious middle path, equally remote from each exceſs; and, while we bear in mind that helpleſſneſs is not delicacy, let us alſo remember that maſculine manners do not neceſſarily include ſtrength of character nor vigour of intellect. Should we not reflect alſo, that we are neither to train up Amazons nor Circaſſians, but that it is our buſineſs to form Chriſtians? that we have to educate not only rational, but accountable beings? and, remembering this, ſhould we not be ſolicitous to let our daughters learn of the well-taught, and aſſociate with the well-bred? In training them, ſhould we not carefully cultivate in-

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tellect, implant religion, and cherish modesty? Then, whatever is engaging in manners would be the natural result of whatever is just in sentiment, and correct in principle; softness would grow out of humility, and external delicacy would spring from purity of heart. Then the decorums, the proprieties, the elegancies, and even the graces, as far as they are simple, pure, and honest, would follow as an almost inevitable consequence; for to follow in the train of the Christian virtues, and not to take the lead of them, is the proper place which religion assigns to the graces.

Whether we have made the best use of the errors of our predecessors, and of our own numberless advantages, and whether the prevailing system be really consistent with sound policy, true taste, or Christian principle, it may be worth our while to inquire.

Would not a stranger be led to imagine by a view of the reigning mode of female education,

education, that human life conſiſted of one univerſal holiday, and that the grand conteſt between the ſeveral competitors was, who ſhould be moſt eminently qualified to excel, and carry off the prize, in the various ſhows and games which were intended to be exhibited in it? And to the exhibitors themſelves, would he not be ready to apply Sir Francis Bacon's obſervation on the Olympian victors, that they were ſo excellent in theſe unneceſſary things, that their perfection muſt needs have been acquired by the neglect of whatever was neceſſary?

What would the poliſhed Addiſon, who thought that one great end of a lady's learning to dance was, that ſhe might know how to ſit ſtill gracefully; what would even the Pagan hiſtorian* of the great Roman conſpirator, who could commemorate it among the defects of his hero's *accompliſhed* miſtreſs, "that ſhe was

* Salluſt.

" too good a ſinger and dancer for a vir-
" tuous woman;"—what would theſe refined critics have ſaid, had they lived as we have done, to ſee the art of dancing lifted into ſuch importance, that it cannot with any degree of ſafety be confided to one inſtructor; but a whole train of ſucceſſive maſters are conſidered as abſolutely eſſential to its perfection? What would theſe accurate judges of female manners have ſaid, to ſee a modeſt young lady firſt delivered into the hands of a military ſerjeant to inſtruct her in the *feminine* art of marching? and when this delicate acquiſition is attained, to ſee her transferred to a profeſſor, who is to teach her the Scotch ſteps; which profeſſor, having communicated his indiſpenſable portion of this indiſpenſable art, makes way for the profeſſor of French dances; and all perhaps, in their turn, either yield to, or have the honour to cooperate with, a finiſhing maſter; each probably receiving a ſtipend which would make

make the pious curate or the learned chaplain rich and happy?

The ſcience of muſic, which uſed to be communicated in ſo competent a degree to a young lady by one able inſtructor, is now diſtributed among a whole band. She now requires, not a maſter, but an orcheſtra. And my country readers would accuſe me of exaggeration, were I to hazard enumerating the variety of muſical teachers who attend at the ſame time in the ſame family; the daughters of which are ſummoned, by at leaſt as many inſtruments as the ſubjects of Nebuchadnezzar, to worſhip the idol which faſhion has ſet up. They would be incredulous were I to produce real inſtances, in which the delighted mother has been heard to declare, that the viſits of maſters of every art, and the different maſters for various gradations of the ſame art, followed each other in ſuch cloſe and rapid ſucceſſion during the whole London reſidence, that her girls had not a

moment's interval to look into a book; nor could ſhe contrive any method to introduce one, till ſhe happily deviſed the ſcheme of reading to them herſelf for half an hour while they were drawing, by which means no time was loſt *.

Before the evil is paſt redreſs, it will be prudent to reflect that in all poliſhed countries an entire devotedneſs to the fine

* Since the firſt edition of this Work appeared, the author has received from a perſon of great eminence the following ſtatement, aſcertaining the *time* employed in the acquiſition of muſic in one inſtance. As a *general* calculation, it will perhaps be found to be ſo far from exaggerated, as to be below the truth. The ſtatement concludes with remarking, that the individual who is the ſubject of it is now married to a man who *diſlikes muſic!*

Suppoſe your pupil to begin at ſix years of age, and to continue at the average of four hours a-day *only*, Sunday excepted, and thirteen days allowed for travelling annually, till ſhe is eighteen, the ſtatement ſtands thus; 300 days multiplied by four, the number of hours amount to 1200; that number multiplied by twelve, which is the number of years, amounts to 14,400 hours!

arts

arts has been one grand ſource of the corruption of the woman; and ſo juſtly were theſe pernicious conſequences appreciated by the Greeks, among whom theſe arts were carried to the higheſt poſſible perfection, that they ſeldom allowed them to be cultivated to a very exquiſite degree by women of great purity of character. And if the ambition of an elegant Britiſh lady ſhould be fired by the idea that the accompliſhed females of thoſe poliſhed ſtates were the admired companions of the philoſophers, the poets, the wits, and the artiſts of Athens; and their beauty or talents, ſo much the favourite ſubjects of the muſe, the lyre, the pencil, and the chiſſel, that their pictures and ſtatues furniſhed the moſt conſummate models of Grecian art: if, I ſay, the accompliſhed females of our day are panting for ſimilar renown, let their modeſty chaſtiſe their ambition, by recollecting that theſe celebrated women are not to be found among

the chaſte wives and the virtuous daughters of the Ariſtides's, the Agis's, and the Phocions; but that they are to be looked for among the Phrynes, the Lais's, the Aſpaſias, and the Glyceras. I am perſuaded the truly Chriſtian female, whatever be her taſte or her talents, will renounce the deſire of any celebrity when attached to impurity of character, with the ſame noble indignation with which the virtuous biographer of the above-named heroes renounced any kind of fame which might be diſhoneſtly attained, by exclaiming, "I had "rather it ſhould be ſaid there never was a "Plutarch, than that they ſhould ſay "Plutarch was malignant, unjuſt, or "envious*."

And while this corruption, brought on by an exceſſive cultivation of the arts, has

* No cenſure is levelled at the exertions of real genius, which is as valuable as it is rare; but at the abſurdity of that ſyſtem which is erecting *the whole ſex* into artiſts]

contributed

contributed its full ſhare to the decline of ſtates, it has always furniſhed an infallible ſymptom of their impending fall. The ſatires of the moſt penetrating and judicious of the Roman poets, corroborating the teſtimonies of the moſt accurate of their hiſtorians, abound with invectives againſt the general depravity of manners introduced by the corrupt habits of female education. The bitterneſs and groſs indelicacy of ſome of theſe ſatiriſts (too groſs to be either quoted or referred to) make little againſt their authority in theſe points; for how ſhocking muſt thoſe corruptions have been, and how obviouſly offenſive their cauſes, which could have appeared ſo highly diſguſting to minds ſo coarſe as not likely to be ſcandalized by ſlight deviations from decency! The famous ode of Horace, attributing the vices and diſaſters of his degenerate country to the ſame cauſe, might, were it quite free from the above objections, be produced, I will not preſume to ſay as

an exact picture of the exiſting manners of this country; but may I not venture to ſay, as a prophecy, the fulfilment of which cannot be very remote? It may however be obſerved, that the modeſty of the Roman matron, and the chaſte demeanor of her virgin daughters, which amidſt the ſtern virtues of the ſtate were as immaculate and pure as the honour of the Roman citizen, fell a ſacrifice to the luxurious diſſipation brought in by their Aſiatic conqueſts; after which the females were ſoon taught a complete change of character. They were inſtructed to accommodate their talents of pleaſing to the more vitiated taſtes of the other ſex; and began to ſtudy every grace and every art which might captivate the exhauſted hearts, and excite the wearied and capricious inclinations of the men; till by a rapid and at length complete enervation, the Roman character loſt its ſignature, and through a quick ſucceſſion of ſlavery, effeminacy, and

vice,

vice, ſunk into that degeneracy of which ſome of the modern Italian ſtates ſerve to furniſh a too juſt ſpecimen.

It is of the eſſence of human things that the ſame objects which are highly uſeful in their ſeaſon, meaſure, and degree, become miſchievous in their exceſs, at other periods and under other circumſtances. In a ſtate of barbariſm, the arts are among the beſt reformers; and they go on to be improved themſelves, and improving thoſe who cultivate them, till, having reached a a certain point, thoſe very arts which were the inſtruments of civilization and refinement, become inſtruments of corruption and decay; enervating and depraving in the ſecond inſtance, by the exceſs and univerſality of their cultivation, as certainly as they refined in the firſt. They become agents of voluptuouſneſs. They excite the imagination; and the imagination thus excited, and no longer under the government of ſtrict principle, becomes the moſt

dangerous ſtimulant of the paſſions; promotes a too keen reliſh for pleaſure, teaching how to multiply its ſources, and inventing new and pernicious modes of artificial gratification.

May we not rank among the preſent corrupt conſequences of this unbounded cultivation, the unchaſte *coſtume*, the impure ſtyle of dreſs, and that indelicate ſtatue-like exhibition of the female figure, which by its artfully diſpoſed folds, its ſeemingly wet and adheſive drapery, ſo defines the form as to prevent covering itſelf from becoming a veil? This licentious mode, as the acute Monteſquieu obſerved on the dances of the Spartan virgins, has taught us "to ſtrip chaſtity itſelf of "modeſty."

May the author be allowed to addreſs to our own country and our own circumſtances, to both of which they ſeem peculiarly applicable, the ſpirit of that beautiful apoſtrophe of the moſt poliſhed poet

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of antiquity to the moſt victorious nation? "Let us leave to the inhabitants of *con-* "*quered countries* the praiſe of carrying to "the very higheſt degree of perfection, "ſculpture and the ſiſter arts; but let *this* "country direct her own exertions to the "art of governing mankind in equity and "peace, of ſhewing mercy to the ſub- "miſſive, and of abaſing the proud among "ſurrounding nations*."

* Let me not be ſuſpected of bringing into any ſort of compariſon the gentleneſs of Britiſh Government with the rapacity of Roman Conqueſts, or the tyrannical principles of Roman dominion. To ſpoil, to butcher, and to commit every kind of violence, they call, ſays one of the ableſt of their hiſtorians, by the lying name of *government*, and when they have ſpread a general deſolation, they call it *peace* (1).

With ſuch *dictatorial*, or as we might now read, *directorial* inquiſitors, *we* can have no point of contact; and if I have applied the ſervile flattery of a delightful poet to the purpoſe of Engliſh happineſs, it was only to ſhew wherein true national grandeur conſiſts, and that every country pays too dear a price for thoſe arts and embelliſhments of ſociety which endanger the loſs of its morals and manners.

(1) Tacitus' Life of Agricola, ſpeech of Galgacus to his ſoldiers.

CHAP. III.

External Improvement.—Children's Balls.—French Governeſſes.

LET me not however be miſunderſtood. The cuſtoms which faſhion has eſtabliſhed, when they are not in oppoſition to what is right, when they are not hoſtile to virtue, ſhould unqueſtionably be purſued in the education of ladies. Piety maintains no natural war with elegance, and Chriſtianity would be no gainer by making her diſciples unamiable. Religion does not forbid that the exterior be made to a certain degree the object of attention. But the admiration beſtowed, the ſums expended, and the time laviſhed on arts, which add little to the intrinſic value of life, ſhould have limitations. While theſe arts ſhould be admired, let them not be admired above their juſt value: while they

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are practifed, let it not be to the exclufion of higher employments: while they are cultivated, let it be to amufe leifure, not to engrofs life.

But it happens unfortunately, that to ordinary obfervers, the girl who is really receiving the worft inftruction often makes the beft figure; while in the more correct but lefs oftenfible education, the deep and fure foundations to which the edifice will owe its ftrength and ftability lie out of fight. The outward accomplifhments have the dangerous advantage of addreffing themfeves more immediately to the fenfes, and of courfe meet everywhere with thofe who can in fome meafure appreciate as well as admire them; for all can fee and hear, but all cannot fcrutinize and difcriminate. External acquirements too recommend themfelves the more becaufe they are more rapidly, as well as more vifibly progreffive; while the mind is led on to improvement by flow motions and imperceptible degrees; while the heart muft

muſt now be admoniſhed by reproof, and now allured by kindneſs; its livelieſt advances being ſuddenly impeded by obſtinacy, and its brighteſt proſpects often obſcured by paſſion; it is ſlow in its acquiſitions of virtue, and reluctant in its approaches to piety; and its progreſs, when any progreſs is made, does not obtrude itſelf to vulgar obſervation. The unruly and turbulent propenſities of the mind are not ſo obedient to the forming hand as defects of manner or awkwardneſs of gait. Often when we fancy that a troubleſome paſſion is completely cruſhed, we have the mortification to find that we have "ſcotch'd the ſnake, not killed it." One evil temper ſtarts up before another is conquered. The ſubduing hand cannot cut off the ever-ſprouting heads ſo faſt as the prolific Hydra can re-produce them, nor fell the ſtubborn Antæus ſo often as he can recruit his ſtrength, and riſe in vigorous and repeated oppoſition.

Hired teachers are alſo under a diſadvantage reſembling tenants at rack-rent; it is their intereſt to bring in an immediate revenue of praiſe and profit, and, for the ſake of a preſent rich crop, thoſe who are not ſtrictly conſcientious, do not care how much the ground is impoveriſhed for future produce. But parents, who are the lords of the ſoil, muſt look to permanent value, and to continued fruitfulneſs. The beſt effects of a careful education are often very remote; they are to be diſcovered in future ſcenes, and exhibited in as yet untried connexions. Every event of life will be putting the heart into freſh ſituations, and making new demands on its prudence, its firmneſs, its integrity, or its forbearance. Thoſe whoſe buſineſs it is to form and model it, cannot foreſee thoſe contingent ſituations ſpecifically and diſtinctly; yet, as far as human wiſdom will allow, they muſt enable it to prepare for them all by general principles, correct habits, and an unremitted ſenſe of depend-

ence on the Great Difpofer of events. As the foldier muft learn and practife all his evolutions, though he do not know on what fervice his leader may command him, by what particular foe he fhall be moft affailed, nor what mode of attack the enemy may employ; fo muft the young Chriftian militant be prepared by previous difcipline for actual duty.

But the contrary of all this is the cafe with external acquifitions. The mafter, it is his intereft, will induftrioufly inftruct his young pupil to fet all her improvements in the moft immediate and confpicuous point of view. To attract admiration is the great principle feduloufly inculcated into her young heart; and is confidered as the fundamental maxim; and, perhaps, if we were required to condenfe the reigning fyftem of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphorifm, it might be comprifed in this fhort fentence, *To allure and to fhine.* This fyftem however is the fruitful germ, from which a

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thousand yet unborn vanities, with all their multiplied ramifications, will spring. A tender mother cannot but feel an honest triumph in contemplating those talents in her daughter which will necessarily excite admiration; but she will also shudder at the vanity that admiration may excite, and at the new ideas it will awaken: and, startling as it may sound, the labours of a wise mother, anxious for her daughter's best interests, will seem to be at variance with those of all her teachers. She will indeed rejoice at her progress, but she will rejoice with trembling; for she is fully aware that if all possible accomplishments could be bought at the price of a single virtue, of a single principle, the purchase would be infinitely dear, and she would reject the dazzling but destructive acquisition. She knows that the superstructure of the accomplishments can be alone safely erected on the broad and solid basis of Christian humility: nay more, that as the materials of which that superstructure is to be com-

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poſed, are in themſelves of ſo unſtable and tottering a nature, the foundation muſt be deepened and enlarged with more abundant care, otherwiſe the fabric will be overloaded with its own ornaments, and what was intended only to embelliſh the building, will prove the occaſion of its fall.

"To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and "a time for every purpoſe under heaven," ſaid the wiſe man; but he ſaid it before the invention of BABY-BALLS; an invention which has formed a kind of æra, and a moſt inauſpicious one, in the annals of poliſhed education. This modern device is a ſort of triple conſpiracy againſt the innocence, the health, and the happineſs of children. Thus, by factitious amuſements, to rob them of a reliſh for the ſimple joys, the unbought delights, which naturally belong to their blooming ſeaſon, is like blotting out ſpring from the year. To ſacrifice the true and proper enjoyments of ſprightly and happy children, is to make them pay a dear and diſproportionate price for their artificial

pleaſures. They ſtep at once from the nurſery to the ball-room; and, by a change of habits as new as it is prepoſterous, are thinking of dreſſing themſelves, at an age when they uſed to be dreſſing their dolls. Inſtead of bounding with the unreſtrained freedom of little wood-nymphs over hill and dale, their cheeks fluſhed with health, and their hearts overflowing with happineſs, theſe *gay* little creatures are ſhut up all the morning, demurely practiſing the *pas grave*, and tranſacting the ſerious buſineſs of acquiring a new ſtep for the evening with more coſt of time and pains than it would have taken them to acquire twenty new ideas.

Thus they loſe the amuſements which properly belong to their ſmiling period, and unnaturally anticipate thoſe pleaſures (ſuch as they are) which would come in, too much of courſe, on their introduction into faſhionable life. The true pleaſures of childhood are cheap and natural; for every object teems with delight to eyes and

hearts new to the enjoyment of life; nay, the hearts of healthy children abound with a general diſpoſition to mirth and joyfulneſs, even without a ſpecific object to excite it; like our firſt parent, in the world's firſt ſpring, when all was new, and freſh, and gay about him,

> they live, and move,
> And feel that they are happier than they know.

Only furniſh them with a few ſimple and harmleſs materials, and a little, but not too much, leiſure, and they will manufacture their own pleaſures with more ſkill, and ſucceſs, and ſatisfaction, than they will receive from all that your money can purchaſe. Their bodily recreations ſhould be ſuch as will promote their health, quicken their activity, enliven their ſpirits, whet their ingenuity, and qualify them for their mental work. But, if you begin thus early to create wants, to invent gratifications, to multiply deſires, to waken dormant ſenſibilities, to ſtir up hidden fires, you are ſtudiouſly laying up for your

children a ſtore of premature caprice and irritability, of impatience and diſcontent.

While childhood preſerves its native ſimplicity, every little change is intereſting, every gratification is a luxury. A ride or a walk, a garland of flowers of her own forming, a plant of her own cultivating, will be a delightful amuſement to a child in her natural ſtate; but theſe harmleſs and intereſting recreations will be dull and taſteleſs to a ſophiſticated little creature, nurſed in ſuch forced, and coſtly, and vapid pleaſures. Alas! that we ſhould throw away this firſt grand opportunity of working into a practical habit the moral of this important truth, that the chief ſource of human diſcontent is to be looked for, not in our real, but in our factitious wants; not in the demands of nature, but in the inſatiable cravings of artificial deſire!

When we ſee the growing zeal to crowd the midnight ball with theſe pretty fairies, we ſhould be almoſt tempted to fancy it was a kind of pious emulation

 among

among the mothers to cure their infants of a fondneſs for vain and fooliſh pleaſures, by tiring them out by this premature familiarity with them. And we ſhould be ſo deſirous to invent an excuſe for a practice ſo inexcuſable, that we ſhould be ready to hope that they were actuated by ſomething of the ſame principle which led the Spartans to introduce their ſons to ſcenes of riot, that they might conceive an early diſguſt at vice! or poſſibly, that they imitated thoſe Scythian mothers who uſed to plunge their new-born infants into the flood, thinking none to be worth ſaving who could not ſtand this early ſtruggle for their lives: the greater part, indeed, as it might have been expected, periſhed; but the parents took comfort, that if many were loſt, the few who eſcaped would be the ſtronger for having been thus expoſed!

To behold lilliputian coquettes, projecting dreſſes, ſtudying colours, aſſorting ribands, mixing flowers, and chooſing feathers; their little hearts beating with hopes

hopes about partners and fears about rivals; to ſee their freſh cheeks pale after the midnight ſupper, their aching heads and unbraced nerves, diſqualifying the little languid beings for the next day's taſk; and to hear the grave apology, "that it is owing "to the wine, the crowd, the heated room "of the laſt night's ball;" all this, I ſay, would really be as ludicrous, if the miſchief of the thing did not take off from the merriment of it, as any of the ridiculous and prepoſterous diſproportions in the diverting travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver.

Under a juſt impreſſion of the evils which we are ſuſtaining from the principles and the practices of *modern* France, we are apt to loſe ſight of thoſe deep and laſting miſchiefs which ſo long, ſo regularly, and ſo ſyſtematically we have been importing from the ſame country, though in another form and under another government. In one reſpect, indeed, the firſt were the more formidable, becauſe we

embraced

embraced the ruin without ſuſpecting it; while we defeat the malignity of the latter, by detecting the turpitude and defending ourſelves againſt its contagion. This is not the place to deſcant on that levity of manners, that contempt of the Sabbath, that fatal familiarity with looſe principles, and thoſe relaxed notions of conjugal fidelity, which have often been tranſplanted into this country by women of faſhion, as a too common effect of a long reſidence in a neighbouring nation: but it is peculiarly ſuitable to my ſubject to advert to another domeſtic miſchief derived from the ſame foreign extraction: I mean, the riſks that have been run, and the ſacrifices which have been made in order to furniſh our young ladies with the means of acquiring the French language in the greateſt poſſible purity. Perfection in this accompliſhment has been ſo long eſtabliſhed as the ſupreme object; ſo long conſidered as the predominant excellence to which all other excellencies muſt bow down, that it would be

be hopeleſs to attack a law which faſhion has immutably decreed, and which has received the ſtamp of long preſcription. We muſt, therefore, be contented with expreſſing a wiſh, that this indiſpenſable perfection could have been attained at the expence of ſacrifices leſs important. It is with the greater regret I animadvert on this and ſome other prevailing practices, as they are errors into which the wiſe and reſpectable have, through want of conſideration, or rather through want of firmneſs to reſiſt the tyranny of faſhion, ſometimes fallen. It has not been unuſual when mothers of rank and reputation have been aſked how they ventured to entruſt their daughters to foreigners, of whoſe principles they knew nothing, except that they were Roman Catholics, to anſwer, "That they had taken care to be ſecure "on that ſubject; for that it had been "ſtipulated that *the queſtion of religion* "*ſhould never be agitated between the* "*teacher and the pupil.*" This, it muſt

be

be confeſſed, is a moſt deſperate remedy; it is like ſtarving to death, to avoid being poiſoned. And who can help trembling for the event of that education, from which religion, as far as the governeſs is concerned, is thus formally and ſyſtematically excluded. Surely it would not be exacting too much, to ſuggeſt at leaſt that an attention no leſs ſcrupulous ſhould be exerted to inſure the character of our children's inſtructor, for piety and knowledge, than is thought neceſſary to aſcertain that ſhe has nothing *patois* in her dialect.

I would rate a correct pronunciation and an elegant phraſeology at their juſt price, and I would not rate them low; but I would not offer up piety and principle as victims to ſounds and accents. And the matter is now made more eaſy; for whatever diſgrace it might once have brought on an Engliſh lady to have had it ſuſpected from her accent that ſhe had the misfortune not to be born in a neighbouring country; ſome recent events may ſerve to

recon-

reconcile her to the ſuſpicion of having been bred in her own. • A country, to which (with all its ſins, which are many!) the whole world is looking up with envy and admiration, as the ſeat of true glory and of comparative happineſs! A country, in which the exile, driven out by the crimes of his own, finds a home! A country, to obtain the protection of which it was claim enough to be unfortunate; and no impediment to have been the ſubject of her direſt foe! a country, which, in this reſpect, humbly imitating the Father of compaſſion, when it offered mercy to a ſuppliant enemy, never conditioned for merit, nor inſiſted on the virtues of the miſerable as a preliminary to its own bounty!

England! with all thy faults I love thee ſtill!

CHAP. IV.

Comparison of the mode of female education in the last age with the present.

To return, however to the subject of general education. We admit that a young lady may excel in speaking French and Italian, may repeat a few passages from a volume of extracts; play like a professor, and sing like a syren; have her dressing-room decorated with her own drawings, tables, stands, flower-pots, screens, and cabinets; nay, she may dance like Sempronia * herself, and yet we shall insist that she may have been very badly educated. I am far from meaning to set no value whatever on any or all of these qualifications; they are all of them elegant, and many of them properly tend to the perfecting

* See Cataline's Conspiracy.

perfecting of a polite education. Thefe things in their meafure and degree may be done, but there are others which fhould not be left undone. Many things are becoming, but "one thing is needful." Befides, as the world feems to be fully apprized of the value of whatever tends to embellifh life, there is lefs occafion here to infift on its importance.

But, though a well-bred young lady may lawfully learn moft of the fafhionable arts; yet, let me afk, does it feem to be the true end of education to make women of fafhion *dancers*, *fingers*, *players*, *painters*, *actreffes*, *fculptors*, *gilders*, *varnifhers*, *engravers*, and *embroiderers*? Moft *men* are commonly deftined to fome profeffion, and their minds are confequently turned each to its refpective object. Would it not be ftrange if they were called out to exercife their profeffion, or to fet up their trade, with only a little general knowledge of the trades and profeffions of all other

men, and without any previous definite application to their own peculiar calling? The profeſſion of ladies, to which the bent of *their* inſtruction ſhould be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and miſtreſſes of families. They ſhould be therefore trained with a view to theſe ſeveral conditions, and be furniſhed with a ſtock of ideas, and principles, and qualifications, and habits, ready to be applied and appropriated, as occaſion may demand, to each of theſe reſpective ſituations. For though the arts which merely embelliſh life muſt claim admiration; yet, when a man of ſenſe comes to marry, it is a companion whom he wants and not an artiſt. It is not merely a creature who can paint, and play, and ſing, and draw, and dreſs, and dance; it is a being who can comfort and counſel him; one who can reaſon, and reflect, and feel, and judge, and diſcourſe, and diſcriminate; one who can aſſiſt him in his affairs, lighten his cares, ſoothe his

ſorrows,

ſorrows, purify his joys, ſtrengthen his principles, and educate his children.

Almoſt any ornamental acquirement is a good thing, when it is not the beſt thing a woman has; and talents are admirable when not made to ſtand proxy for virtues. The writer of theſe pages is intimately acquainted with ſeveral ladies who, excelling moſt of their ſex in the art of muſic, but excelling them alſo in prudence and piety, find little leiſure or temptation, amidſt the delights and duties of a large and lovely family, for the exerciſe of this charming talent; they regret that ſo much of their own youth was waſted in acquiring an art which can be turned to ſo little account in married life, and are now conſcientiouſly reſtricting their daughters in the portion of time allotted to its acquiſition.

Far be it from me to diſcourage the cultivation of any exiſting talent; but may it not be queſtioned of the fond believing mother, whether talents, like the ſpirits of

Owen Glendower, though conjured by parental partiality with ever ſo loud a voice,

Yet will they come when you do call for them?

That injudicious practice, therefore, cannot be too much diſcouraged, of endeavouring to create talents which do not exiſt in nature. *That their daughters ſhall learn every thing*, is ſo general a maternal maxim, that even unborn daughters, of whoſe expected abilities and conjectured faculties, it is preſumed, no very accurate judgment can previouſly be formed, are yet predeſtined to this univerſality of accompliſhments. This comprehenſive maxim, thus almoſt univerſally brought into practice, at once weakens the general powers of the mind, by drawing off its ſtrength into too great a variety of directions; and cuts up time into too many ſeparate portions, by ſplitting it into ſuch an endleſs multiplicity of employments. I know that I am treading on tender ground;

but I cannot help thinking that the reſtleſs pains we take to cram up every little vacuity of life, by crowding one new thing upon another, rather creates a thirſt for novelty than knowledge; and is but a well-diſguiſed contrivance to anticipate the keeping us in after-life more effectually from converſing with ourſelves. The care taken to prevent *ennui* is but a creditable plan for promoting ſelf-ignorance. We run from one occupation to another, (I ſpeak of thoſe arts to which little intellect is applied,) with a view to lighten the preſſure of time; above all we fly to them to ſave us from our own thoughts; we fly to them to reſcue us from ourſelves; whereas were we thrown a little more on our own hands, we might at laſt be driven, by way of ſomething to do, to try to get acquainted with our own hearts. But it is only one part of the general inconſiſtency of the human character, that with the perſon of all others we beſt love, we leaſt like to converſe and to

form an intimacy; I mean ourſelves. But though our being leſs abſorbed by this buſy trifling, which dignifies its inanity with the impoſing name of occupation, might render us ſomewhat more ſenſible of the tedium of life; yet might not this very ſenſation tend to quicken our purſuit of a better? For an awful thought here ſuggeſts itſelf. If life be ſo long that we are driven to ſet at work every engine to paſs away the tedioufneſs of time; how ſhall we do to get rid of the tedioufneſs of eternity? an eternity in which not one of the acquiſitions which life has been exhauſted in acquiring, will be of the leaſt uſe? Let not then the ſoul be ſtarved by feeding it on ſuch unſubſtantial aliment, for the mind can be no more nouriſhed by theſe empty huſks than the body can be fed with ideas and principles.

Among the boaſted improvements of the preſent age, none affords more frequent matter of peculiar exultation, than the manifeſt

manifeſt ſuperiority in the employments of the young ladies of our time over thoſe of the good houſewives of the laſt century. It is matter of general triumph that they are at preſent employed in learning the polite arts, or in acquiring liberal accompliſhments; while it is inſiſted that their forlorn predeceſſors wore out their joyleſs days in adorning the manſion-houſe with hideous hangings of ſorrowful tapeſtry and disfiguring tent-ſtitch. Moſt chearfully do I allow to the reigning modes their juſt claim of boaſted ſuperiority, for certainly there is no piety in bad taſte. Still, granting all the deformity of the exploded ornaments, one advantage attended them: the walls and floors were not vain of their decorations; and it is to be feared, that the little perſon ſometimes is. The flattery beſtowed on the obſolete employments, for probably even *they* had their flatterers, furniſhed leſs aliment to ſelfiſhneſs, and leſs gratification to vanity; and the occupation itſelf was

leſs likely to impair the delicacy and modeſty of the ſex, than the exquiſite cultivation of perſonal accompliſhments or perſonal decorations; and every mode which keeps down vanity and keeps back *ſelf*, has at leaſt a moral uſe. For while we admire the rapid movement of the elegant fingers of a young lady buſied in working or painting her ball dreſs, we cannot help ſuſpecting that her alacrity may be a little ſtimulated by the animating idea *how very well ſhe ſhall look in it.* Nor was the induſtrious matron of Ithaca more ſoothed at her ſolitary loom with the ſweet reflection that by her labour ſhe was gratifying her filial and conjugal feelings, than the induſtrious but pleaſure-loving damſel of Britain is gratified by the anticipated admiration which her ingenuity is procuring for her beauty.

Might not this propenſity be a little checked, and an intereſting feeling be combined with her induſtry, were the fair artiſt

artiſt habituated to exerciſe her ſkill in adorning ſome one elſe rather than herſelf? For it will add no lightneſs to the lighteſt head, nor vanity to the vaineſt heart, to ſolace her labours in reflecting how exceedingly the gown ſhe is working will become her mother. This ſuggeſtion, trifling as it may ſeem, of habituating young ladies to exerciſe their taſte and devote their leiſure, not to the decoration of their own perſons, but to the ſervice of thoſe to whom they are bound by every tender tie of love and duty, would not only help to repreſs vanity, but by thus aſſociating the idea of induſtry with that of filial tenderneſs, would promote, while it gratified ſome of the beſt affections of the heart. The Romans (and it is mortifying on the ſubject of Chriſtian education to be driven ſo often to refer to the ſuperiority of Pagans) were ſo well aware of the importance of keeping up a ſenſe of family fondneſs and attachment by the very ſame

means which promoted ſimple and domeſtic employment, that no citizen of note ever appeared in public in any garb but what was ſpun by his wife and daughter: and this virtuous faſhion was not confined to the early days of republican ſeverity, but even in all the pomp and luxury of imperial power, Auguſtus preſerved in his own family this ſimplicity of primitive manners.

Let me be allowed to repeat, that I mean not with prepoſterous praiſe to deſcant on the ignorance or the prejudices of paſt times, nor abſurdly to regret that vulgar ſyſtem of education which rounded the little circle of female acquirements within the limits of the ſampler and the receipt-book. Yet if a preference almoſt excluſive was then given to what was merely uſeful, a preference almoſt equally excluſive alſo is now aſſigned to what is merely ornamental. And it muſt be owned, that if the life of a young lady, formerly, too

much reſembled the life of a confectioner, it now too much reſembles that of an actreſs; the morning is all rehearſal, and the evening is all performance. And thoſe who are trained in this regular routine, who are inſtructed in order to be exhibited, ſoon learn to feel a ſort of impatience in thoſe ſocieties in which *their* kind of talents are not likely to be brought into play; the taſk of an auditor becomes dull to her who has been uſed to be a performer. Eſteem and kindneſs become but cold ſubſtitutes to one who has been fed on plaudits and pampered with acclamations: and the exceſſive commendation which the viſitor is expected to pay for his entertainment not only keeps alive the flame of vanity in the artiſt by conſtant fuel, but is not ſeldom exacted at a price which a veracity at all ſtrict would grudge. The misfortune is, when a whole circle are obliged to be competitors who ſhall flatter moſt, it is not eaſy to be at once very ſincere and very civil. And unfortunately, while the age is be-

come ſo knowing and ſo faſtidious, that if a young lady does not play like a public performer, no one thinks her worth attending to; yet if ſhe does ſo excel, ſome of the ſobereſt of the admiring circle feel a ſtrong alloy to their pleaſure, on reflecting at what a vaſt expence of time this perfection muſt probably have been acquired*.

The ſtudy of the fine arts, indeed, is forced on young perſons, with or without genius, (faſhion as was ſaid before having ſwallowed up that diſtinction,) to ſuch exceſs, as to vex, fatigue, and diſguſt thoſe who have no talents, and to determine them, as ſoon as they become free agents, to abandon all ſuch tormenting acquirements.

* That accurate judge of the human heart, Madame de Maintenon, was ſo well aware of the danger reſulting from ſome kinds of excellence, that after the young ladies of the Court of Louis Quatorze had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the performance of ſome dramatic pieces of Racine, when her friends told her how admirably they had played their parts; "Yes," anſwered this wiſe woman, "ſo admirably that they "ſhall never play again."

While

While by this inceſſant compulſion ſtill more pernicious effects are often produced on thoſe who actually poſſeſs genius; for the natural conſtant reference in the mind to that public performance for which they are ſeduloufly cultivating this talent, excites the ſame paſſions of envy, vanity, and competition in the dilettanti performers, as might be ſuppoſed to ſtimulate profeſſional candidates for fame and profit at public games and theatrical exhibitions. Is this emulation, is this ſpirit of rivalry, is this hunger after public praiſe the temper which prudent parents would wiſh to excite and foſter? Beſides, in *any* event the iſſue is not favourable: if the young performers are timid, they diſgrace themſelves and diſtreſs their friends; if courageous, their boldneſs offends ſtill more than their bad performance. Shall they then be ſtudiouſly brought into ſituations in which failure diſcredits and ſucceſs diſguſts?

May I venture, without being accuſed of pedantry to conclude this chapter with another

another reference to Pagan examples? The Hebrews, Egyptians, and Greeks, believed that they could more effectually teach their youth maxims of virtue, by calling in the aid of music and poetry; these maxims, therefore, they put into verses, and these verses were set to the most popular and simple tunes, which the children sang; thus was their love of goodness excited by the very instruments of their pleasure; and the senses, the taste, and the imagination, as it were, pressed into the service of religion and morals. Dare I appeal to Christian parents, if these arts are commonly used by *them*, as subsidiary to religion and to a system of morals much more worthy of every ingenious aid and association, which might tend to recommend them to the youthful mind? Dare I appeal to Christian parents, whether music, which fills up no trifling portion of their daughters' time, does not fill it without any moral end, or even without any specific

ſpecific object? Nay, whether ſome of the favourite ſongs of poliſhed ſocieties are not amatory, are not Anacreontic, more than quite become the modeſt lips of innocent youth and delicate beauty?

CHAP. V.

On the religious employment of time.—On the manner in which holidays are paſſed.—Selfiſhneſs and inconſideration conſidered.—Dangers ariſing from the world.

THERE are many well-diſpoſed parents, who, while they attend to theſe faſhionable acquirements, do not neglect to infuſe religious knowledge into the minds of their children; and having done this, are but too apt to conclude that they have done all, and have fully acquitted themſelves of the important duties of education. For having, as they think, ſufficiently grounded their daughters in religion, they do not ſcruple to allow them to ſpend almoſt the whole of their time exactly like the daughters of worldly people. Now, though it be one great point gained, to have imbued their young minds with the beſt know-

ledge,

ledge, the work is not therefore by any means accomplished. "What do ye more "than others?" is a question which, in a more extended sense, religious parents must be prepared to answer.

Such parents should go on to teach children the religious use of time, the duty of consecrating to God every talent, every faculty, every possession, and of devoting their whole lives to his glory. People of piety should be more peculiarly on their guard against a spirit of idleness, and a slovenly habitual wasting of time, because this practice, by not assuming a palpable shape of guilt, carries little alarm to the conscience. Even religious characters are in danger on this side; for not allowing themselves to follow the world in its excesses and diversions, they have consequently more time upon their hands; and instead of dedicating the time so rescued to its true purposes, they sometimes make as it were compensation to themselves for their abstinence from dangerous places of public

public resort, by an habitual frivolousness at home; by a superabundance of unprofitable small-talk, idle reading, and a quiet and dull frittering away of time. Their day perhaps has been more free from actual evil; but it will often be discovered to have been as unproductive as that of more worldly characters; and they will be found to have traded to as little purpose with their master's talents. But a Christian must take care to keep his conscience peculiarly alive to the unapparent, though formidable perils of unprofitableness.

To these, and to all, the author would earnestly recommend to accustom their children to pass at once from serious business to active and animated recreation; they should carefully preserve them from those long and torpid intervals between both, that languid indolence and spiritless trifling, that merely getting rid of the day without stamping on it any characters of active goodness or of intellectual profit, that inane drowsiness which wears out such

large

large portions of life in both young and old. It has, indeed, paſſed into an aphoriſm, that activity is neceſſary to virtue, even among thoſe who are not apprized that it is alſo indiſpenſable to happineſs. So far are many parents from being ſenſible of this truth, that vacations from ſchool are not merely allowed, but appointed to paſs away in weariſome ſauntering and indeterminate idleneſs, and this is done by erring tenderneſs by way of converting the holidays into pleaſure! Nay, the idleneſs is ſpecifically made over to the child's mind, as the ſtrongeſt expreſſion of the fondneſs of the parent! A diſlike to learning is thus ſyſtematically excited by prepoſterouſly erecting indolence into a reward for application! And the promiſe of doing nothing is held out as the ſtrongeſt temptation, as well as the beſt recompence, for having done well!

Theſe and ſuch like errors of conduct ariſe from the latent, but very operative, principle

principle of ſelfiſhneſs. This principle is obviouſly promoted by many habits and practices ſeemingly of little importance; and indeed ſelfiſhneſs is ſo commonly interwoven with vanity and inconſideration, that I have not always thought it neceſſary to mark the diſtinction. They are alternately cauſe and effect; and are produced and re-produced by reciprocal operation. They are a joint confederacy who are mutually promoting each other's ſtrength and intereſt; they are united by almoſt inſeparable ties, and the indulgence of either is the gratification of all. Ill-judging tenderneſs is in fact only a concealed ſelf-love, which cannot bear to be witneſs to the uneaſineſs which a preſent diſappointment, or difficulty, or vexation, would cauſe to a darling child; but which yet does not ſcruple by improper gratification to ſtore up for it future miſeries, which the child will infallibly ſuffer, though it may be at a diſtant period, which the ſelfiſh mother

does not diſturb herſelf by anticipating, becauſe ſhe thinks ſhe may be ſaved the pain of beholding.

Another principle, ſomething different from this, though it may properly fall under the head of ſelfiſhneſs, ſeems to actuate ſome parents in their conduct towards their children: I mean, a certain ſlothfulneſs of mind, a love of eaſe, which impoſes a voluntary blindneſs, and makes them not chooſe to ſee what will give them trouble to combat. From the perſons in queſtion we frequently hear ſuch expreſſions as theſe: "Children will be children."—"My children, I ſuppoſe, are much like thoſe of other people," &c. Thus we may obſerve this dangerous and deluſive principle frequently turning off with a ſmile from the firſt indications of thoſe tempers, which from their fatal tendency ought to be very ſeriouſly taken up. I would be underſtood now as ſpeaking to conſcientious parents, who conſider it as a general duty to correct the faults of their

children, but who, from this indolence of mind, are extremely backward in *discovering* such faults, and are not very well pleased when they are pointed out by others. Such parents will do well to take notice, that whatever they consider it is a duty to *correct*, must be equally a duty to endeavour to *find out*. And this indolent love of ease is the more to be guarded against, as it not only leads parents into erroneous conduct towards their children, but is peculiarly dangerous to themselves. It is a fault frequently cherished from ignorance of its real character; for, not bearing on it the strong features of deformity which mark many other vices, but on the contrary bearing some resemblance to virtue, it is frequently mistaken for the Christian graces of patience, meekness, and forbearance, than which nothing can be more opposite; these proceeding from the Christian principle of self-denial, the other from self-indulgence.

In

In this connection may I be permitted to remark on the practice at the tables of many families when the children are at home for the holidays? Every delicacy is forced upon them, with the tempting remark, "that they cannot have this or "that dainty at school." They are indulged in irregular hours for the same motive, "because they cannot have that "indulgence at school." Thus the natural seeds of idleness, sensuality, and sloth, are at once cherished, by converting the periodical visit at home into a season of intemperance, late hours, and exemption from learning. So that children are habituated, at an age when lasting associations are formed in the mind, to connect the idea of study with that of hardship, of happiness with gluttony, and of pleasure with loitering, feasting, or sleeping. Would it not be better, would it not be kinder, to make them combine the delightful idea of home, with the gratification of the social affections, the fondness of maternal love,

love, the kindneſs, and warmth, and confidence of the ſweet domeſtic attachments,

—And all the charities
Of father, ſon, and brother?

I will venture to ſay, that thoſe liſtleſs and vacant days, when the thoughts have no preciſe object; when the imagination has nothing to ſhape; when induſtry has no definitive purſuit; when the mind and the body have no exerciſe, and the ingenuity has no acquiſition either to anticipate or to enjoy, are the longeſt, the dulleſt, and the leaſt happy, which children of ſpirit and genius ever paſs. Yes! it is a few ſhort but keen and lively intervals of animated pleaſure, ſnatched from between the ſucceſſive labours and duties of a well-ordered, buſy day, looked forward to with hope, enjoyed with taſte, and recollected without remorſe, which, both to men and to children, yield the trueſt portions of enjoyment. O ſnatch your offſpring from

adding to the number of thofe objects of fupreme commiferation, who feek their happinefs in doing nothing! The animal may be gratified by it, but the man is degraded. Life is but a fhort day; but it is a working day. Activity *may* lead to evil; but inactivity *cannot* be led to good.

Young ladies fhould alfo be accuftomed to fet apart a fixed portion of their time, as facred to the poor *, whether in relieving, inftructing, or working for them;

* It would be a noble employment, and well becoming the tendernefs of their fex, if ladies were to confider the fuperintendance of the poor as their immediate office. They are peculiarly fitted for it; for from their own habits of life they are more intimately acquainted with domeftic wants than the other fex; and in certain inftances of ficknefs and fuffering peculiar to themfelves, they fhould be expected to have more fympathy; and they have obvioufly more leifure. There is a certain religious fociety, diftinguifhed by fimplicity of drefs, manners, and language, whofe poor are perhaps better taken care of than any other; and one reafon may be, that they are immediately under the infpection of the women.

and the performance of this duty muſt not be left to the event of contingent circumſtances, or the operation of accidental impreſſions; but it muſt be eſtabliſhed into a principle, and wrought into a habit. A ſpecific portion of the day muſt be allotted to it, on which no common engagement muſt be allowed to intrench. Thoſe periods of time, which are not *ſtated*, are ſeldom turned to their proper uſe; and nothing ſhort of a regular plan (which muſt, however, be ſometimes made to give way to circumſtances) inſures the conſcientious diſcharge of any duty. This will help to furniſh a powerful remedy for that ſelfiſhneſs whoſe ſtrong holds (the truth cannot be too often repeated) it is the grand buſineſs of Chriſtian education perpetually to attack. If we were but aware how much better it makes ourſelves to wiſh to ſee others better, and to aſſiſt in making them ſo, we ſhould find that the good done would be of as much importance by the habit of doing good, which it would

induce in our own minds, as by its beneficial effects on the objects of our kindness *.

In what relates to pecuniary bounty, it will be requiring of young persons a very small sacrifice, if you teach them merely to give that money to the poor which properly belongs not to the child but to the parent; this sort of charity commonly subtracts little from their own pleasures, especially when what they have bestowed is immediately made up to them as a reward for their little fit of generosity. They will, on this plan, soon learn to give, not only for praise but for profit. The sacrifice of an orange to a little girl, or a feather to a great

* In addition to the instruction of the individual poor, and the superintendance of charity schools, ladies might be highly useful in assisting the parochial clergy in the adoption of that excellent plan for the instruction of the ignorant suggested by the Bishop of Durham in his last admirable charge to his clergy. It is with pleasure the author is enabled to add that the scheme has actually been adopted with good effect in that extensive diocese.

one,

one, given at the expence of their own gratification, would be a better leſſon of charity on its right ground, than a conſiderable ſum of money to be preſently replaced by the parent. And it would be habituating them early to combine two ideas which ought never to be ſeparated, charity and ſelf-denial.

As an antidote to ſelfiſhneſs, as well as to pride and indolence, they ſhould alſo very early be taught to perform all the little offices in their power for themſelves; they ſhould be accuſtomed not to be inſolently exerciſing their ſuppoſed prerogative of rank and wealth, by calling for ſervants where there is no real occaſion; above all, they ſhould be accuſtomed to conſider the domeſtics' hours of meals and reſt as almoſt ſacred, and the golden rule ſhould be practically and uniformly enforced, even on ſo trifling an occaſion as ringing a bell through mere wantonneſs, or ſelf-love, or pride.

To check the growth of inconfiderateneſs, young ladies ſhould early be taught to diſcharge their little debts with punctuality. They ſhould be made ſenſible of the cruelty of obliging trades-people to call often for the money due to them; and of hindering and detaining thoſe whoſe time is the ſource of their ſubſiſtence, under pretence of ſome frivolous engagement, which ought to be made to bend to the comfort and advantage of others. They ſhould conſcientiouſly allow ſufficient time for the execution of their orders; and with a Chriſtian circumſpection, be careful not to drive work-people, by needleſs hurry, into loſing their reſt, or breaking the Sabbath. I have known a lady give her gown to a mantua-maker on the Saturday night, to whom ſhe would not for the world ſay in ſo many words, "You muſt work through the whole "of Sunday," while ſhe was virtually compelling her to do ſo, by an injunction to bring the gown home finiſhed on the Monday

Monday morning, on pain of her difpleafure. To thefe hardfhips numbers are continually driven by good-natured but inconfiderate employers. As thefe petty exactions of inconfideration furnifh alfo a conftant aliment to felfifhnefs, let not a defire to counteract them be confidered as leading to too minute details; nothing is too frivolous for animadverfion, which tends to fix a bad habit in the fuperior, or to wound the feelings of the dependant.

Would it not be turning thofe political doctrines, which are now fo warmly agitating, to a truly moral account, and give the beft practical anfwer to the popular declamations on the inequality of human conditions, were the rich carefully to inftruct their children to foften that inevitable inequality by the mildnefs and tendernefs of their behaviour to their inferiors? This difpenfation of God, which excites fo many finful murmurs, would, were it thus practically improved, tend to eftablifh the glory of that Being who is now fo often

charged

charged with injuſtice; for God himſelf is covertly attacked in many of the invectives againſt laws, governments, and the ſuppoſed arbitrary and unjuſt diſproportion of ranks and riches.

This diſpenſation, thus properly improved, would at once call into exerciſe the generoſity, kindneſs, and forbearance of the ſuperior; and the patience, reſignation, and gratitude of the inferior: and thus, while we were vindicating the *ways* of Providence, we ſhould be accompliſhing his *plan*, by bringing into action thoſe virtues of both claſſes, which would have had little exerciſe had there been no inequality in ſtation and fortune. Thoſe more exalted perſons who are ſo zealouſly contending for the privileges of rank and power, ſhould never loſe ſight of the religious duties and conſiderate virtues which the poſſeſſion of rank and power impoſes on themſelves; duties and virtues which ſhould ever be inſeparable from thoſe privileges. As the inferior claſſes have little

little real right to complain of *laws* in this reſpect, let the great be watchful to give them as little cauſe to complain of *manners*. In order to this, let them carefully train up their children to ſupply by individual kindneſs thoſe caſes of hardſhip which laws cannot reach; let them obviate, by an active and well-directed compaſſion, thoſe imperfections of which the beſt conſtructed human inſtitutions muſt unavoidably partake; and, by the exerciſe of private bounty, early inculcated, ſoften thoſe diſtreſſes which can never come under the cognizance of even the beſt government. Let them teach their offspring, that the charity of the rich ſhould ever be ſubſidiary to the public proviſion in thoſe numberleſs inſtances to which the moſt equal laws cannot apply. By ſuch means every leſſon of politics may be converted into a leſſon of piety; and a ſpirit of condeſcending love might win over ſome, whom a ſpirit of invective will only inflame.

Among

Among the inſtances of negligence into which even religiouſly diſpoſed parents and teachers are apt to fall, one is, that they are not ſufficiently attentive in finding interesting employment for the Sunday. They do not make a ſcruple of ſometimes allowing their children to fill up the intervals of public worſhip with their ordinary employments and common ſchool exerciſes. They are not aware that they are training their offspring to an early and a ſyſtematic profanation of the Sabbath by this cuſtom; for to children, their taſks are their buſineſs; to them a French or Latin exerciſe is as ſerious an occupation as the exerciſe of a trade or profeſſion is to a man; and if they are allowed to think the one right *now*, they will not be brought hereafter to think that the other is wrong; for the opinions and practices fixed at this important ſeaſon are not eaſily altered; and an early habit becomes rooted into an inveterate prejudice. By this overſight even the friends of religion may be contributing eventually

eventually to that abolition of the Lord's day, ſo devoutly wiſhed and ſo indefatigably laboured after by its enemies, as the deſired preliminary to the deſtruction of whatever is moſt dear to Chriſtians. What obſtruction would it offer to the general progreſs of youth, if all their Sunday exerciſes (which, with reading, compoſing, tranſcribing, and getting by heart, might be extended to an entertaining variety) were adapted to the peculiar nature of the day?

Thoſe whoſe own ſpirits and vigour of mind are exhauſted by the amuſements of the world, and who therefore grow faint and languid under the continuance of ſerious occupation, are not aware how different the caſe is with lively young people, whoſe ſpring of action has not been broken by habitual indulgence. They are not aware that a firm and well diſciplined intellect wants, comparatively, little amuſement. The mere change from one book to another, is a relief almoſt amounting to pleaſure. But then the variation muſt be judiciouſly

judiciously made, so that to novelty must be superadded comparative amusement; that is, the gradation should be made from the more to the less serious book. If care be thus taken that greater exertion of the mental powers shall not be required, when, through length of application, there is less ability or disposition to exert them; such a well ordered distinction, will produce on the mind nearly the same effect as a new employment.

It is not meant to impose on them such rigorous study as shall convert the day they should be taught to love into a day of burdens and hardships, or to abridge them of such innocent enjoyments as are compatible with a season of holy rest It is intended merely to suggest that there should be a marked distinction in the nature of their employments and studies; for on the observance or neglect of this, as was before observed, their future notions and principles will in a good degree be formed. The Gospel, in rescuing the Lord's day from

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the rigorous bondage of the Jewiſh Sabbath, never leſſened the obligation to keep it holy, nor meant to ſanction any ſecular occupation*. Chriſtianity in lightening its auſterities has not defeated the end of its inſtitution; in purifying its ſpirit, it has not aboliſhed its object.

Though the author, chiefly writing with a view to domeſtic inſtruction, has purpoſely avoided entering on the diſputed queſtion, whether a ſchool or home education be beſt; a queſtion which perhaps muſt generally be decided by the ſtate of the individual home, and the ſtate of the individual ſchool; yet ſhe begs leave to ſuggeſt one remark, which peculiarly belongs to a ſchool education; namely, the general habit of converting the Sunday into a viſiting day by way of gaining time; as if the appropriate inſtructions of the Lord's day were the cheapeſt ſacrifice which

* The ſtrongeſt proof of this obſervation is the *conduct* of the firſt Chriſtians, who had their inſtructions immediately from the Apoſtles.

could

could be made to pleaſure. Even in thoſe ſchools, in which religion is conſidered as an indiſpenſable part of inſtruction, this kind of inſtruction is almoſt excluſively limited to Sundays: how then are girls ever to make any progreſs in this moſt important article, if they are habituated to loſe the religious advantages of the ſchool, for the ſake of having more dainties for dinner abroad? This remark cannot be ſuppoſed to apply to the viſits which children make to religious parents, and indeed it only applies to thoſe caſes where the ſchool is a conſcientious ſchool, and the viſit a trifling viſit.

Among other ſubjects which engroſs a a good ſhare of worldly converſation, one of the moſt attracting is beauty. Many ladies have often a random way of talking rapturouſly on the general importance and the faſcinating power of beauty, who are yet prudent enough to be very unwilling to let their own daughters find out they are handſome. Perhaps the contrary courſe

might be ſafer. If the little liſtener were not conſtantly hearing that beauty is the beſt gift, ſhe would not be ſo vain from fancying herſelf to be the beſt gifted. Be leſs ſolicitous, therefore, to conceal from her a ſecret, which, with all your watchfulneſs, ſhe will be ſure to find out, without your telling; but rather ſeek to lower the general value of beauty in her eſtimation. Uſe your daughter in all things to a different ſtandard from that of the world. It is not by vulgar people and ſervants only that ſhe will be told of her being pretty. She will be hearing it not only from gay ladies, but from grave men; ſhe will be hearing it from the whole world around her. The antidote to the preſent danger is not now to be ſearched for; it muſt be already operating; it muſt have been provided for in the foundation laid in the general principle ſhe has been imbibing before this particular temptation of beauty came in queſtion. And this general principle is an habitual indifference to flattery.

She

She muſt have learnt not to be intoxicated by the praiſe of the world. She muſt have learnt to eſtimate things by their intrinſic worth, rather than by the world's eſtimation. Speak to her with particular kindneſs and commendation of plain but amiable girls; mention with compaſſion ſuch as are handſome but ill-educated; ſpeak caſually of ſome who were once thought pretty, but have ceaſed to be good; make uſe of the arguments ariſing from the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of beauty, as ſtrong additional reaſons for making that which is little valuable in itſelf, ſtill leſs valuable. As it is a *new* idea which is always dangerous, you may thus break the force of this danger by allowing her an early introduction to this inevitable knowledge, which would become more intereſting, and of courſe more perilous by every additional year: and if you can guard againſt that fatal and almoſt univerſal error of letting her ſee that ſhe is more loved on account of her beauty, her familiarity with

with the idea may be leſs dangerous than its novelty afterwards would prove.

But the great and conſtant peril to which young perſons in the higher walks of life are expoſed, is the prevailing turn and ſpirit of general converſation. Even the children of better families, who are well inſtructed when at their ſtudies, are yet at other times continually beholding the WORLD ſet up in the higheſt and moſt advantageous point of view. Seeing the world! knowing the world! ſtanding well with the world! making a figure in the world! is ſpoken of as including the whole ſum and ſubſtance of human advantages. They hear their education almoſt excluſively alluded to with reference to the *figure* it will enable them to make in the world. In almoſt all companies they hear all that the world admires ſpoken of with admiration; rank flattered, fame coveted, power ſought, beauty idolized, money conſidered as the one thing needful, and as the atoning ſubſtitute for the want of all

other

other things; profit held up as the reward of virtue, and worldly estimation as the just and highest prize of laudable ambition; and after the very spirit of the world has been thus habitually infused into them all the week, one cannot expect much effect from their being coldly and customarily told now and then on Sundays, that they must not "love the world, nor the things "of the world." To tell them once in seven days that it is a sin to gratify an appetite which you have been whetting and stimulating the preceding six, is to require from them a power of self-control, which our knowledge of the impetuosity of the passions, especially in early age, should have taught us is impossible.

This is not the place to animadvert on the usual misapplication of the phrase, "knowing the world;" which term is commonly applied, in the way of panegyric, to keen, designing, selfish, ambitious men, who study mankind in order to turn them to their own account. But

in the true ſenſe of the expreſſion, the ſenſe which Chriſtian parents would wiſh to impreſs on their children, to know the world is to know its emptineſs, its vanity, its futility, and its wickedneſs. To know it is to deſpiſe it, to be on our guard againſt it, to labour to live above it; and in this view an obſcure Chriſtian in a village may be ſaid to know the world better than a hoary courtier or wily politician. For how can they be ſaid to *know* it, who go on to love it, to value it, to be led captive by its allurements, to give their ſoul in exchange for its lying promiſes?

But while ſo falſe an eſtimate is often made in faſhionable ſociety of the real value of things; that is, while Chriſtianity does *not* furniſh the ſtandard, and human opinion *does*; while the multiplying our deſires is conſidered as a ſymptom of elegance, though to ſubdue thoſe deſires is the grand criterion of religion; while moderation is beheld as indicating a poorneſs of ſpirit, though to that very poverty of ſpirit

ſpirit the higheſt promiſe of the Goſpel is aſſigned; while worldly wiſdom is ſedulouſly enjoined by worldly friends, in contradiction to that aſſertion, "that the wiſdom "of the world is fooliſhneſs with God;" while the praiſe of man is to be anxiouſly ſought in oppoſition to that aſſurance, that "The fear of man worketh a ſnare;" while they are taught all the week, that "The friendſhip of the world" is the wiſeſt purſuit; and on Sundays that "it is "enmity with God;" while theſe things are ſo (and that they are ſo in a good degree who will undertake to deny?) may we not venture to affirm that a Chriſtian education, though it be not an impoſſible, is yet a very difficult work?

CHAP. VI.

ON THE EARLY FORMING OF HABITS.

On the Neceſſity of forming the Judgment to direct thoſe Habits.

It can never be too often repeated, that one of the great objects of education is the forming of habits. I may be ſuſpected of having recurred too often, though hitherto only incidentally, to this topic. It is, however, a topic of ſuch importance, that it will be uſeful to conſider it ſomewhat more in detail; as the early forming of right habits on ſound principles ſeems to be one of the grand ſecrets of virtue and happineſs.

The forming of any one good habit ſeems to be effected rather by avoiding the oppoſite bad habit, and reſiſting every temptation to the oppoſite vice, than by the mere occaſional practice of the virtue required. *Humility*, for inſtance, is leſs

an act than a disposition of mind. It is not so much a single performance of some detached humble deed, as an incessant watchfulness against every propensity to pride. *Sobriety* is not a prominent ostensible thing; it evidently consists in a series of negations, and not of actions. It is a conscientious habit of resisting every incentive to intemperance.—*Meekness* is best attained and exemplified by guarding against every tendency to anger, impatience, and resentment.—A habit of *attention* and application is formed by early and constant vigilance against a trifling spirit and a wandering mind.—An habit of *industry*, by watching against the blandishments of pleasure, the waste of small portions of time, and the incroachment of small indulgences.

Now, to stimulate us to an earnest desire of working any or all of these habits into the minds of children, it will be of importance to consider what a variety of uses each of them involves.

To

To take, for example, the cafe of moderation and temperance. It would feem to a fuperficial obferver, of no very great importance to acquire a habit of felf-denial in refpect either to the elegancies of decoration, or to the delicacies of the table, or to the common routine of pleafure; that there can be no occafion for an indifference to luxuries harmlefs in themfelves, and no need of daily moderation in thofe perfons who are poffeffed of affluence, and to whom therefore, as the expence is no object, fo the forbearance is thought of no importance. Thofe acts of felf-denial, I admit, when contemplated by themfelves, appear to be of no great value, yet they affume high importance, if you confider what it is to have, as it were, dried up the fpring of only one importunate paffion; if you reflect, after any one fuch conqueft is obtained, how eafily, comparatively fpeaking, it is followed up by others.

How much future virtue and felf-government, in more important things, may a

mother

mother therefore be ſecuring to that child, who ſhould always remain in as high a ſituation as ſhe is in when the firſt foundations of this quality are laying; but ſhould any reverſe of fortune take place in the daughter, how much integrity and independence of mind alſo may be prepared for her, by the early exciſion of ſuperfluous deſires. She, who has been trained to ſubdue theſe propenſities, will, in all probability, be preſerved from running into worthleſs company, merely for the ſake of the ſplendor which may be attached to it. She will be reſcued from the temptation to do wrong things, for the ſake of enjoyments from which ſhe cannot abſtain. She is delivered from the danger of flattering thoſe whom ſhe deſpiſes; becauſe her moderate mind and well-ordered deſires do not ſolicit indulgences, which could only be procured by mean compliances. For ſhe will have been habituated to conſider the *character* as the leading circumſtance of attachment, and the

ſplendor as an accident, which may or may not belong to it; but which, when it does, as it is not a ground of merit in the poſſeſſor, ſo it is not to be the ground of her attachment. The habit of ſelf-control, in ſmall, as well as in great things, involves in the aggregate leſs loſs of pleaſure, than will be experienced by diſappointments in the mind ever yielding itſelf to the love of preſent indulgences, whenever thoſe indulgences ſhould be abridged or withdrawn.

She who has been accuſtomed to have an early habit of reſtraint exerciſed over all her appetites and temper; ſhe who has been uſed to ſet bounds to her deſires as a general principle, will have learned to withſtand a paſſion for dreſs and perſonal ornaments; and the woman who has conquered this propenſity, has ſurmounted one of the moſt domineering temptations which aſſail the ſex. While this ſeemingly little circumſtance, if neglected, and the oppoſite habit formed, may be the firſt ſtep to every

every ſucceſſive error, and every conſequent diſtreſs. Thoſe women who are ruined by ſeduction in the lower claſſes, and thoſe who are made miſerable by ambitious marriages in the higher, will be more frequently found to owe their miſery to an ungoverned paſſion for dreſs and ſhow, than to motives more apparently bad. An habitual moderation in this article growing out of a pure ſelf-denying principle, and not ariſing from the affectation of a ſingularity, which may have more pride in it, than others feel in the indulgence of any of the things which this ſingularity renounces, includes many valuable advantages. Modeſty, ſimplicity, humility, œconomy, prudence, liberality, charity, are almoſt inſeparably, and not very remotely, connected with an habitual victory over perſonal vanity and a turn to perſonal expence. The inferior and leſs ſtriking virtues are the ſmaller pearls, which ſerve to ſtring and connect the great ones.

An early and unremitting zeal in forming the mind to a habit of attention, not only produces the outward expreſſion of good breeding, as one of its incidental advantages; but involves, or rather creates, better qualities than itſelf; while vacancy and inattention not only produce vulgar manners, but are uſually the indication, if not of an ordinary, yet of a neglected underſtanding. To the habitually inattentive, books offer little benefit; company affords little improvement; while a ſelf-impoſed attention ſharpens obſervation, and creates a ſpirit of inſpection and inquiry, which often lifts a common underſtanding to a degree of eminence in knowledge, ſagacity, and uſefulneſs, which indolent or negligent genius does not always reach. A habit of attention exerciſes intellect, quickens diſcernment, multiplies ideas, enlarges the power of combining images and comparing characters, and gives a faculty of picking up improvement from circumſtances the leaſt promiſing; and gaining inſtruc-

inſtruction from thoſe ſlight, but frequently recurring occaſions, which the abſent and the negligent turn to no account. Scarcely any thing or perſon is ſo unproductive, as not to yield ſome fruit to the attentive and ſedulous collector of ideas. But this is far from being the higheſt praiſe of ſuch a perſon; ſhe, who early impoſes on herſelf a habit of ſtrict attention to whatever ſhe is engaged in, begins to wage early war with wandering thoughts, uſeleſs reveries, and that diſqualifying train of buſy, but unprofitable imaginations, by which the idle are occupied, and the abſent are abſorbed. She who keeps her intellectual powers in action, ſtudies with advantage, herſelf, her books, and the world. Whereas they, in whoſe undiſciplined minds vagrant thoughts have been ſuffered to range without reſtriction on ordinary occaſions, will find they cannot eaſily call them home, when wanted to aſſiſt in higher duties. Thoughts, which are indulged in habitual wandering, will not be readily reſtrained

in the ſolemnities of public worſhip or of private devotion.

But in ſpeaking of the neceſſary habits, it muſt be noticed that the habit of unremitting *induſtry*, which is indeed cloſely connected with thoſe of which we have juſt made mention, cannot be too early or too ſeduloufly formed. Let not the ſprightly and the brilliant reject induſtry as a plebeian quality, as a quality to be exerciſed only by thoſe who have their bread to earn, or their fortune to make. But let them reſpect it, and adopt it as an habit to which many elevated characters have, in a good meaſure, owed their diſtinction. The maſters in ſcience, the leaders in literature, legiſlators and ſtateſmen, even apoſtles and reformers would not, at leaſt in ſo eminent a degree, have enlightened, converted, and aſtoniſhed the world; had they not been eminent poſſeſſors of this ſober and unoſtentatious quality. It is the quality to which the immortal Newton modeſtly aſcribed his own vaſt attainments; who, when he

he was aſked by what means he had been enabled to make that ſucceſsful progreſs which ſtruck mankind with wonder, replied, that it was not ſo much owing to any ſuperior ſtrength of genius, as to an habit of patient thinking, laborious attention, and cloſe application. We muſt, it is true, make ſome deductions for the humility of the ſpeaker. Yet it is not overrating its value, to aſſert that induſtry is the ſturdy and hard working pioneer, who by perſevering labour removes obſtructions, overcomes difficulties, clears intricacies, and thus facilitates the march, and aids the victories of genius.

An exact habit of *œconomy* is of the ſame family with the two foregoing qualities; and, like them, is the prolific parent of a numerous offspring of virtues. For want of the early ingrafting of this practice on its only legitimate ſtock,—a ſound principle of integrity,—may we not, in too many inſtances in ſubſequent life, almoſt apply to the fatal effects of domeſtic profuſeneſs,

what Tacitus obſerves of a laviſh profligacy in the expenditure of public money—that an Exchequer which is exhauſted by prodigality will, probably, be repleniſhed by crimes.

Thoſe who are early trained to ſcrupulous punctuality in the diviſion of time, and an exactneſs to the hours of their childiſh buſineſs, will have learnt how much the œconomy of time is promoted by habits of punctuality when they ſhall enter on the more important buſineſs of life. By getting one employment cleared away, exactly as the ſucceeding employment ſhall have a claim to be diſpatched, they will learn two things; that one buſineſs muſt not trench on the time which belongs to another buſineſs, and to ſet a value on thoſe odd quarters of an hour, and even minutes, which are ſo often loſt between ſucceſſive duties, for want of calculation, punctuality, and arrangement.

A habit of *punctuality* is perhaps one of the earlieſt which the youthful mind may be

be made capable of receiving; and it is ſo connected with truth, with morals, and with the general good government of the mind, as to render it important that it ſhould be brought into exerciſe on the ſmalleſt occaſions. But I refrain from enlarging on this point as it will be diſcuſſed in another part of this work*.

It requires perhaps ſtill more ſedulity to lay early the firſt foundation of thoſe interior habits, which are grounded on watchfulneſs againſt ſuch faults as do not often betray themſelves by breaking out into open exceſſes; and which there would therefore be leſs diſcredit in indulging. It ſhould more particularly make a part of the firſt elements of education, to try to infuſe into the mind that particular principle which ſtands in oppoſition to thoſe evil tempers, to which the individual pupil is more immediately addicted. As it cannot be followed up too cloſely, ſo it can hardly

* See Chapter on Definitions.

be ſet about too early. May we not borrow an important illuſtration of this truth from the fabulous Hero of the Grecian ſtory? He who was one day to perform exploits, which ſhould fill the earth with his renown, began by conquering in his infancy; and it was a preliminary to his delivering the world from monſters in his riper years, that he ſhould ſet out by ſtrangling the ſerpents in his cradle.

It muſt however be obſerved that diligent care is to be exerciſed, that, together with the gradual formation of theſe and other uſeful *habits*, an adequate attention be employed to the forming of the *judgment*; to the framing ſuch a ſound conſtitution of mind, as ſhall ſupply the power of directing all the faculties of the underſtanding, and all the qualities of the heart, to keep their proper places and due bounds, to obſerve their juſt proportions, and maintain their right ſtation, relation, order, and dependence.

For inſtance, while the young perſon's mind is trained to thoſe habits of attention and induſtry which we have been recommending; great care muſt be uſed that her judgment be ſo enlightened as to enable her to form ſound notions with regard to what is really worthy her attentive purſuit, without which diſcriminating power, application would only be actively miſemployed; and ardour and induſtry would but ſerve to lead her more widely from the right road of Truth. Without a correct judgment ſhe would be waſting her activity on what was frivolous, or exhauſting it on what was miſchievous. Without that ardour and activity we have been recommending, ſhe might only be "weaving "ſpiders' webs;" with it, if deſtitute of judgment, ſhe would be "hatching cocka-"trices' eggs."

Again, if the judgment be not well informed as to the nature and true ends of temperance, the ill-inſtructed mind might be led into a ſuperſtitious reliance on the merits

merits of ſelf-denial; and reſting in the letter of a few outward obſervances, without any conſideration of the ſpirit of this Chriſtian virtue, might be led to infer that the kingdom of heaven was the *abſtinence* from "meat and drink," and "not peace, "and righteouſneſs, and joy in the Holy "Ghoſt."

The ſame well-ordered judgment will alſo be required in ſuperintending and regulating the habit of œconomy; for extravagance being rather a relative than a poſitive term, the true art of regulating expence, is not to proportion it to the faſhion, or to the opinion or practice of others, but to our own ſtation and our own circumſtances. Ariſtippus being accuſed of extravagance by one who was not rich, becauſe he had given ſix crowns for a ſmall fiſh, ſaid to him, "Why, what "would you have given?"—"Twelve "pence," anſwered the other. "Then," replied Ariſtippus, "our economy is equal;

"for

"for six crowns are no more to me, than
"twelve pence are to you."

It is the more important to enlighten the judgment in this point, because so predominant is the control of custom and fashion, that men of unfixed principle are driven to borrow other people's judgment of them before they can venture to determine whether they themselves are rich or happy. These vain slaves to human opinion do not so often say, How ought I to act? or What ought I to spend? as, What does the world think I ought to do? What do others think I ought to spend?

There is also a perpetual call for the interference of the judgment in settling the true notion of what meekness is, before we can adopt the practice without falling into error. We must apprize those on whose minds we are inculcating this amiable virtue, of the broad line of distinction between Christian meekness and that well-bred tone and gentle manner which passes current for it in the world. We must

teach

teach them alſo to diſtinguiſh between an humble opinion of our own ability to judge, and a ſervile dereliction of truth and principle, in order to purchaſe the poor praiſe of indiſcriminate compliance and yielding ſoftneſs. We muſt lead them to diſtinguiſh accurately between honeſty and obſtinacy, between perſeverance and perverſeneſs, between firmneſs and prejudice. We muſt convince them that it is not meekneſs, but baſeneſs, when through a diſhoneſt dread of offending the proſperous, or diſpleaſing the powerful, we forbear to recommend, or refuſe to ſupport, thoſe whom it is our duty to recommend or to ſupport. That it is ſelfiſhneſs and not meekneſs, when through fear of forfeiting any portion of our reputation, or riſking our own favour with others, we refuſe to bear our teſtimony to ſuſpected worth or diſcredited virtue *.

* To this criminal timidity, Madame de Maintenon, a woman of parts and piety, ſacrificed the ingenious and amiable Racine; whom, while ſhe had

taſte enough to admire, ſhe had not the generoſity to defend, when the Royal favour was withdrawn from him. A ſtill darker cloud hangs over her fame, on account of the ſelfiſh neutrality ſhe maintained in not interpoſing her good offices between the reſentments of the King and the ſufferings of the Hugonots. It is a heavy aggravation of her fault, that ſhe herſelf had been educated in the faith of theſe perſecuted people.

CHAP. VII.

Filial obedience not the character of the age. —A comparison with the preceding age in this respect.—Those who cultivate the mind advised to study the nature of the soil.—Unpromising children often make strong characters.—Teachers too apt to devote their pains almost exclusively to children of parts.

AMONG the real improvements of modern times, and they are not a few, it is to be feared that the growth of filial obedience cannot be included. Who can forbear observing and regretting in a variety of instances, that not only sons but daughters have adopted something of that spirit of independence, and disdain of control which characterise the times? And is it not too generally obvious that domestic manners are not slightly tinctured with the prevailing

ing hue of public principles? The *rights of man* have been difcuffed, till we are fomewhat wearied with the difcuffion. To thefe have been oppofed, as the next ftage in the progrefs of illumination, and with more prefumption than prudence, *the rights of woman*. It follows, according to the natural progreffion of human things, that the next influx of that irradiation which our enlighteners are pouring in upon us, will illuminate the world with grave defcants on the *rights of youth*, the *rights of children*, the *rights of babies!*

This revolutionary fpirit in families fuggefts the remark, that among the faults with which it has been too much the fafhion of recent times to load the memory of the incomparable Milton, one of the charges brought againft his private character (for with his political character we have here nothing to do) has been, that he was fo fevere a father as to have compelled his daughters, after he was blind, to read aloud to him, for his fole pleafure, Greek

and Latin authors of which they did not underſtand a word. But this is in fact nothing more than an inſtance of the ſtrict domeſtic rgulations of the age in which Milton lived; and ſhould not be brought forward as a proof of the ſeverity of his individual temper. Nor indeed in any caſe ſhould it ever be conſidered as an hardſhip for an affectionate child to amuſe an afflicted parent, even though it ſhould be attended with a heavier ſacrifice of her own pleaſure than that produced in the preſent inſtance *.

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* In ſpite of this too prevailing ſpirit, and at a time when, by an inverted ſtate of ſociety, ſacrifices of eaſe and pleaſure are rather exacted by children from parents, than required of parents from children, numberleſs inſtances might be adduced of filial affection truly honourable to the preſent period. And the Author records with pleaſure, that ſhe has ſeen amiable young ladies of high rank conducting the ſteps of a blind but illuſtrious parent with true filial fondneſs; and has often contemplated, in another family, the intereſting attentions of daughters who were both hands and eyes to an infirm and nearly blind father. It is

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Is the author then inculcating the harſh doctrine of paternal auſterity? By no means. It drives the gentle ſpirit to artifice, and the rugged to deſpair. It generates deceit and cunning, the moſt hopeleſs and hateful in the whole catalogue of female failings. Ungoverned anger in the teacher, and inability to diſcriminate between venial errors and premeditated offence, though they may lead a timid creature to hide wrong tempers, or to conceal bad actions, will not help her to ſubdue the one or to correct the other. The dread of ſeverity will drive terrified children to ſeek, not for reformation, but for impunity. A readineſs to forgive them promotes frankneſs: and we ſhould, above all things, encourage them to be frank, in order to come at their faults. They

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but juſtice to repeat that theſe examples are not taken from that middle rank of life which Milton filled, but from the daughters of the higheſt officers in the ſtate.

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have not more faults for being open, they only *discover* more; and to know the worſt of the character we have to regulate will enable us to make it better.

Diſcipline, however, is not cruelty, and reſtraint is not ſeverity. A diſcriminating teacher will appreciate the individual character of each pupil, in order to appropriate her management. We muſt ſtrengthen the feeble, while we repel the bold. We cannot educate by a *receipt*; for after ſtudying the beſt rules, and after digeſting them into the beſt ſyſtem, much muſt depend on contingent circumſtances; for that which is good may yet be inapplicable. The cultivator of the human mind muſt, like the gardener, ſtudy diverſities of ſoil, or he may plant diligently and water faithfully with little fruit. The ſkilful labourer knows that even where the ſurface is not particularly promiſing, there is often a rough ſtrong ground which will amply repay the trouble of breaking it up; yet we are often moſt taken with a ſoft ſurface,

though

though it conceal a ſhallow depth, becauſe it promiſes preſent reward and little trouble. But ſtrong and pertinacious tempers, of which perhaps obſtinacy is the leading vice, under ſkilful management often turn out ſteady and ſterling characters; while from ſofter clay a firm and vigorous virtue is but ſeldom produced. Pertinacity is often principle, which wants nothing but to be led to its true object; while the uniformly yielding, and univerſally accommodating ſpirit, is not ſeldom the reſult of a feeble tone of morals, of a temper eager for praiſe and acting for reward.

But theſe revolutions in character cannot be effected by mere education. Plutarch has obſerved that the medical ſcience would never be brought to perfection till poiſons ſhould be converted into phyſic. What our late improvers in natural ſcience have done in the medical world, by converting the moſt deadly ingredients into inſtruments of life and health, Chriſtianity with a ſort of divine alchymy has effected in the moral world,

world; by that tranſmutation which makes thoſe paſſions which have been working for ſin become active in the cauſe of religion. The violent temper of Saul of Tarſus, which was "exceedingly mad" againſt the ſaints of God, did God ſee fit to convert into that burning zeal which enabled Paul the Apoſtle to labour ſo unremittingly for the converſion of the Gentile world. Chriſtianity indeed does not ſo much give us new affections or faculties, as give a new direction to thoſe we already have. She changes that ſorrow of the world which worketh death into "godly ſorrow which worketh repent-"ance." She changes our anger againſt the perſons we diſlike into hatred of their ſins. "The fear of man which worketh "a ſnare," ſhe tranſmutes into "that fear "of God which worketh ſalvation." That religion does not extinguiſh the paſſions, but only alters their object, the animated expreſſions of the fervid Apoſtle confirm—

"Yea,

"Yea, what *fearfulneſs*; yea, what *clear-*
"*ing of yourſelves*; yea, what *indignation*;
"yea, what *fear*; yea, what *vehement*
"*deſire*; yea, what *zeal*; yea, what
"*revenge* *."

Thus, by ſome of the moſt troubleſome paſſions of our nature being converted by the bleſſing of God on a religious education to the ſide of virtue, a double purpoſe is effected. Becauſe, it is the character of the paſſions never to obſerve a neutrality. If they are no longer rebels, they become auxiliaries; and the acceſſion of ſtrength is doubled, becauſe a foe ſubdued is an ally obtained. For it is the effect of religion on the paſſions, that when ſhe ſeizes the enemy's garriſon, ſhe does not content herſelf with defeating its future miſchiefs, ſhe does not deſtroy the works, ſhe does not burn the arſenal and ſpike the cannon; but the artillery ſhe ſeizes, ſhe turns to her own uſe; ſhe at-

* 2 Corinthians, vii. 11.

tacks in her turn, and plants its whole force against the enemy from whom she has taken it.

But while I would deprecate harshness, I would enforce discipline; and that not merely on the ground of religion, but of happiness also. One reason, not seldom brought forward by tender but mistaken mothers as an apology for their unbounded indulgence, especially to weakly children, is, that they probably will not live to enjoy the world when grown up, and that therefore they would not abridge the little pleasure they may enjoy at present, lest they should be taken out of the world without having tasted any of its delights. But a slight degree of observation would prove that this is an error in judgment as well as in principle. For, omitting any considerations respecting their future welfare, and entering only into their immediate interests; it is an indisputable fact that children who know no control, whose faults encounter no contradiction,

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and whoſe humours experience conſtant indulgence, grow more irritable and capricious, invent wants, create deſires, loſe all reliſh for the pleaſures which they know they may reckon upon; and become perhaps more miſerable than even thoſe unfortunate children who labour under the more obvious and more commiſerated misfortune of ſuffering under the tyranny of unkind parents.

An early habitual reſtraint is peculiarly important to the future character and happineſs of women. A judicious, unrelaxing, but ſteady and gentle curb on their tempers and paſſions can alone enſure their peace and eſtabliſh their principles. It is a habit which cannot be adopted too ſoon, nor perſiſted in too pertinaciouſly. They ſhould when very young be enured to contradiction. Inſtead of hearing their *bon mots* treaſured up and repeated till the gueſts are tired, and till the children begin to think it dull, when they themſelves are not the little heroines of the theme, they

ſhould be accuſtomed to receive but moderate praiſe for their vivacity or their wit, though they ſhould receive juſt commendation for ſuch qualities as have more worth than ſplendour.

Patience, diligence, quiet, and unfatigued perſeverance, induſtry, regularity, and œconomy of time, as theſe are the diſpoſitions I would labour to excite, ſo theſe are the qualities I would warmly commend. So far from admiring genius, or extolling its prompt effuſions, I would rather intimate that excellence, to a certain degree, is in the power of every competitor: that it is the vanity of over-valuing herſelf for ſuppoſed original powers, and ſlackening exertion in conſequence of that vanity, which often leave the lively ignorant, and the witty ſuperficial. A girl who overhears her mother tell the company that ſhe is a genius, and is ſo quick, that ſhe never thinks of applying to her taſk till a few minutes before ſhe is to be called to repeat it, will acquire ſuch

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a confidence in her own abilities, that ſhe will be advancing in conceit as ſhe is falling ſhort in knowledge. Whereas, if ſhe were made to ſuſpect that her want of application rather indicated a deficiency than a ſuperiority in her underſtanding, ſhe would become induſtrious in proportion as ſhe became modeſt; and by thus adding the diligence of the humble to the talents of the ingenious, ſhe might really attain a degree of excellence, which mere quickneſs of parts, too lazy, becauſe too proud to apply, ſeldom attains.

Girls ſhould be led to diſtruſt their own judgment; they ſhould learn not to murmur at expoſtulation; they ſhould be accuſtomed to expect and to endure oppoſition. It is a leſſon with which the world will not fail to furniſh them; and and they will not practiſe it the worſe for having learnt it the ſooner. It is of the laſt importance to their happineſs, even in this life, that they ſhould early acquire a ſubmiſſive temper

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and a forbearing ſpirit. They muſt even endure to be thought wrong ſometimes, when they cannot but feel they are right. And while they ſhould be anxiouſly aſpiring to do well, they muſt not expect always to obtain the praiſe of having done ſo. But while a gentle demeanour is inculcated, let them not be inſtructed to practiſe gentleneſs merely on the low ground of its being decorous, and feminine, and pleaſing, and calculated to attract human favour: but let them be carefully taught to cultivate it on the high principle of obedience to Chriſt; on the practical ground of labouring after conformity to HIM, who, when he propoſed himſelf as a perfect pattern of imitation, did not ſay, Learn of me, for I am great, or wiſe, or mighty, but "Learn of me, for I am "meek and lowly:" and who graciouſly promiſed that the reward ſhould accompany the practice, by encouragingly adding "and ye ſhall find reſt to your ſouls." Do not teach them humility on the ordinary

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nary ground that vanity is *unamiable*, and that no one will *love* them if they are proud; for that will only go to correct the exterior, and make them soft and smiling hypocrites. But inform them, that "God "resisteth the proud," while "them "that are meek he shall guide in judg-"ment, and such as are gentle, them shall "he teach his way." In these, as in all other cases, an habitual attention to the *motives* should be carefully substituted in their young hearts, in the place of too much anxiety about the *event* of actions. Principles, aims, and intentions should be invariably insisted on, as the only true ground of right practice, and they should be carefully guarded against too much solicitude for that human praise which attaches to appearances as much as to realities, to success more than to desert.

Let me repeat, without incurring the censure of tautology, that it will be of vast importance not to let slip the earliest occasions of working gentle manners into

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an habit on their only true foundation, Christian meekness. For this purpose I would again urge your calling in the example of our Redeemer in aid of his precepts. Endeavour to make your pupil feel that all the wonders exhibited in his life do not so overwhelm the awakened heart with rapture, love, and astonishment, as the perpetual instances of his humility and meekness, with which the Gospel abounds. Stupendous miracles, exercises of infinite power prompted by infinite mercy, are actions which we should naturally enough conceive as growing out of omnipotence and divine perfection: but silence under cruel mockings, patience under reproach, gentleness of demeanor under unparalleled injuries; these are perfections of which unassisted nature not only has no conception in a Divine Being, but at which it would revolt, had not the reality been exemplified by our perfect pattern. Healing the sick, feeding the multitude, restoring the blind, raising the dead,

dead, are deeds of which we could form ſome adequate idea, as neceſſarily flowing from Almighty goodneſs: but to waſh his diſciples' feet,—to preach the Goſpel to the *poor*,—to renounce not only eaſe, for that heroes have done on human motives, —but to renounce praiſe, to forgive his perſecutors, to love his enemies, to pray for his murderers with his laſt breath;—theſe are things which, while they compel us to cry out with the Centurion, "Truly "this was the Son of God," ſhould remind us alſo, that they are not only *adorable* but *imitable* parts of his character. Theſe are not ſpeculative and barren doctrines which he came to preach to Chriſtians, but living duties which he meant to entail on them; ſymbols of their profeſſion; teſts of their diſcipleſhip. Theſe are perfections which we are not barely to contemplate with holy awe and diſtant admiration, as if they were reſtricted to the *divine* nature of our Redeemer; but we muſt conſider them as ſuited to the human nature

alſo,

alſo, which he condeſcended to participate. In *contemplating*, we muſt *imitate*; in admiring, we muſt practiſe; and in our meaſure and degree go and do likewiſe. Elevate your thoughts for one moment to this ſtandard, (and you ſhould never allow yourſelf to be contented with a lower,) and then go, if you can, and teach your children to be mild, and ſoft, and gentle on worldly grounds, on human motives, as an external attraction, as a decoration to their ſex, as an appendage to their rank, as an expreſſion of their good breeding.

There is a cuſtom among teachers, which is not the more right for being common; they are apt to beſtow an undue proportion of pains on children of the beſt capacity, as if only geniuſes were worthy of attention. They ſhould reflect that in moderate talents, carefully cultivated, we are perhaps to look for the chief happineſs and virtue of ſociety. If ſuperlative genius had been generally neceſſary, its exiſtence would not have been

been ſo rare; for Omnipotence could eaſily have made thoſe talents common which we now conſider as extraordinary, had they been neceſſary to the perfection of his plan. Beſides, while we are conſcientiouſly inſtructing children of moderate capacity, it is a comfort to reflect, that if no labour will raiſe them to a high degree in the ſcale of intellectual diſtinction, yet they may be led on to perfection in that road in which "a way-faring man, though "ſimple, ſhall not err." And when a mother feels diſpoſed to repine that her family is not likely to exhibit a groupe of future wits and growing beauties, let her conſole herſelf by looking abroad into the world, where ſhe will quickly perceive that the monopoly of happineſs is not engroſſed by beauty, nor that of virtue by genius.

Perhaps mediocrity of parts was decreed to be the ordinary lot, by way of furniſhing a ſtimulus to induſtry, and ſtrengthening the motives to virtuous application.

plication. For is it not obvious that moderate abilities, carefully carried to that meaſure of perfection of which they are capable often enables their poſſeſſors to outſtrip, in the race of knowledge and of uſefulneſs, their more brilliant but leſs perſevering competitors? It is with mental endowments, as with other rich gifts of Providence; the inhabitant of the luxuriant ſouthern clime, where Nature has done every thing in the way of vegetation, indolently lays hold on this very plea of fertility which ſhould animate his exertions, as a reaſon for doing nothing himſelf; ſo that the ſoil which teems with ſuch encouraging abundance leaves the favoured poſſeſſor idle, and comparatively poor: while the native of the leſs genial region, ſupplying by his labours the deficiencies of his lot, overtakes his more favoured competitor; by ſubſtituting induſtry for opulence, he improves the riches of his native land beyond that which is bleſſed with warmer ſuns, and thus vindicates

Provi-

Providence from the charge of partial diſtribution.

A girl who has docility will ſeldom be found to want underſtanding ſufficient for all the purpoſes of an uſeful, a happy, and a pious life. And it is as wrong for parents to ſet out with too ſanguine a dependence on the figure their children are to make in life, as it is unreaſonable to be diſcouraged at every diſappointment. Want of ſucceſs is ſo far from furniſhing a motive for relaxing their energy, that it is a reaſon for redoubling it. Let them ſuſpect their own plans, and reform them; let them diſtruſt their own principles, and correct them. The generality of parents do too little; ſome do much, and miſs their reward, becauſe they look not to any ſtrength beyond their own: after much is done, much will remain undone; for the entire regulation of the heart and affections is not the work of education alone, but is effected by the operation of divine grace. Will it be accounted enthuſiaſm to

to suggeſt, "that the fervent effectual "prayer of a righteous *parent* availeth "much?" and to obſerve that perhaps the reaſon why ſo many anxious mothers fail of ſucceſs is, becauſe they repoſe with confidence in their own ſkill and labour, neglecting to look to HIM without whoſe bleſſing they do but labour in vain?

On the other hand, is it not to be feared that ſome pious parents have fallen into an error of an oppoſite kind? From a full conviction that human endeavours are vain, and that it is God alone who can change the heart, they are earneſt in their prayers, but not ſo earneſt in their endeavours. Such parents ſhould be reminded, that if they do not add their exertions to their prayers, their children are not likely to be more benefited than the children of thoſe who do not add their prayers to their exertions. What God has joined, let not man preſume to ſeparate. It *is* the work of God, we readily

acknowledge, to implant religion in the heart, and to maintain it there as a ruling principle of conduct. And is it not the same God which causes the corn to grow? Are not our natural lives constantly preserved by his power? Who will deny that in him we live, and move, and have our being? But how are these works of God carried on? By *means* which he has appointed. By the labour of the husbandman the corn is made to grow: by food the body is sustained: and by religious instruction God is pleased to work upon the human heart. But unless we diligently plow, and sow, and weed, and manure, have we any right to depend on the refreshing showers and ripening suns of heaven for the blessing of an abundant harvest? As far as *we* see of the ways of God, all his works are carried on by *means*. It becomes therefore our duty to use the means, and trust in God; to remember that God will not work without the means; and that the means can

effect nothing without his bleffing. "Paul "may plant and Apollos water, but it is "God muft give the increafe." But to what does he give the increafe? To the *exertions* of Paul and Apollos. It is never faid, becaufe God only can give the increafe, that Paul and Apollos may fpare their labour.

It is one grand object to give the young probationer juft and fober views of the world on which fhe is about to enter. Inftead of making her bofom bound at the near profpect of emancipation from her inftructors; inftead of teaching her young heart to dance with premature flutterings as the critical winter draws near in which *fhe is to come out*; inftead of raifing a tumult in her bufy imagination at the approach of her firft *grown up ball*, an event held out as forming the firft grand epocha of female life, as the period from which a frefh computation, fixing the pleafures and independence of womanhood, is to be dated; inftead of this, endeavour to convince her, that

that the world will not turn out to be that ſcene of unvarying and never-ending delights which ſhe has perhaps been led to expect, not only from the ſanguine temper and warm ſpirits natural to youth, but from the value ſhe has ſeen put on thoſe ſhowy accompliſhments which have too probably been fitting her for her exhibition in life. Teach her that this world is not a ſtage for the diſplay of ſuperficial or even of ſhining talents, but for the ſtrict and ſober exerciſe of fortitude, temperance, meekneſs, faith, diligence, and ſelf-denial; of her due performance of which Chriſtian graces, Angels will be ſpectators, and God the judge. Teach her that human life is not a ſplendid romance, ſpangled over with brilliant adventures, and enriched with extraordinary occurrences, and diverſified with wonderful incidents; lead her not to expect that it will abound with ſcenes which will call extraordinary qualities and wonderful powers into perpetual action; and for which if ſhe acquit herſelf well ſhe

will be rewarded with proportionate fame and certain commendation. But apprize her that human life is a true hiſtory, many paſſages of which will be dull, obſcure, and uninteresting; ſome perhaps tragical; but that whatever gay incidents and pleaſing ſcenes may be interſperſed in the progreſs of the piece, yet finally "one event hap-"peneth to all;" to all there is one awful and infallible cataſtrophe. Apprize her that the eſtimation which mankind forms of merit is not always juſt, nor is its praiſe very exactly proportioned to deſert; tell her that the world weighs actions in far different ſcales from "the balance of the "ſanctuary," and eſtimates worth by a far different ſtandard from that of the goſpel. Apprize her that while her pureſt intentions may be ſometimes calumniated, and her beſt actions miſrepreſented, ſhe will, on the other hand, be liable to receive commendation on occaſions wherein her conſcience will tell her ſhe has not deſerved it; and that ſhe may be extolled by others

for actions for which, if she be honest, she will condemn herself.

Do not however give her a gloomy and discouraging picture of the world, but rather seek to give her a just and sober view of the part she will have to act in it. And restrain the impetuosity of hope, and cool the ardour of expectation, by explaining to her, that this part, even in her best estate, will probably consist in a succession of petty trials, and a round of quiet duties which, if well performed, though they will make little or no figure in the book of fame, will prove of vast importance to her in that day when *another* "book is opened, and the judgment is set, "and every one will be judged according "to the deeds done in the body, whether "they be good or bad."

Say not that these just and sober views will cruelly wither her young hopes, blast her budding prospects, and deaden the innocent satisfactions of life. It is

not true. There is, happily, an active ſpring in the mind of youth which bounds with freſh vigour and uninjured elaſticity from any ſuch temporary depreſſion. It is not meant that you ſhould darken her proſpect, ſo much as that you ſhould enlighten the eyes of her underſtanding to contemplate it. And though her feelings, taſtes, and paſſions, will all be againſt you, if you ſet before her a faithful delineation of life, yet it will be ſomething to get her judgment on your ſide. It is no unkind office to aſſiſt the ſhort view of youth with the aids of long-ſighted experience; to enable them to diſcover ſpots in the brightneſs of that world which dazzles them in proſpect, though it is probable they will after all chooſe to believe their own eyes rather than the offered glaſs.

CHAP. VIII.

On female ſtudy, and initiation into knowledge.—Error of cultivating the imagination to the neglect of the judgment.—Books of reaſoning recommended.

As this little work by no means aſſumes the character of a general ſcheme of education, the author has purpoſely avoided expatiating largely on any kind of inſtruction, but as it happens to be connected, either immediately or remotely, with objects of a moral or religious nature. Of courſe ſhe has been ſo far from thinking it neceſſary to enter into the enumeration of thoſe popular books which are uſed in general inſtruction, that ſhe has purpoſely forborne to mention any. With ſuch books the riſing generation is far more copiouſly and ably furniſhed than any that has preceded it; and out of an excellent variety

variety the judicious inſtructor can hardly fail to make ſuch a ſelection as ſhall be beneficial to the pupil.

But while due praiſe ought not to be withheld from the improved methods of communicating the elements of general knowledge; yet is there not ſome danger that our very advantages may lead us into error, by cauſing us to repoſe ſo confidently on the multiplied helps which facilitate the entrance into learning, as to render our pupils ſuperficial through the very facility of acquirement? Where ſo much is done for them, may they not be led to do too little for themſelves? and beſides that exertion may ſlacken for want of a ſpur, may there not be a moral diſadvantage in poſſeſſing young perſons with the notion that learning may be acquired without diligence, and knowledge be attained without labour? Sound education never *can* be made a "primroſe path of "dalliance." Do what we will we cannot *cheat* children into learning, or *play* them into

into knowledge, according to the conciliating ſmoothneſs of the modern creed, and the ſelfiſh indolence of modern habits. There is no idle way to any acquiſitions which really deſerve the name. And as Euclid, in order to repreſs the impetuous vanity of greatneſs, told his Sovereign that there was no royal way to geometry; ſo the fond mother may be aſſured that there is no ſhort cut to any other kind of learning; no privileged bye-path cleared from the thorns and briars of repulſe and difficulty, for the accommodation of opulent inactivity or feminine weakneſs. The tree of knowledge, as a puniſhment, perhaps, for its having been at firſt unfairly taſted, cannot now be climbed without difficulty; and this very circumſtance ſerves afterwards to furniſh not only literary pleaſures, but moral advantages. For the knowledge which is acquired by unwearied aſſiduity is laſting in the poſſeſſion, and ſweet to the poſſeſſor; both perhaps in proportion to the coſt and labour of the acquiſition. And though

though an able teacher ought to endeavour, by improving the communicating faculty in himſelf, (for many know what they cannot teach,) to ſoften every difficulty; yet in ſpite of the kindneſs and ability with which he will ſmooth every obſtruction, it is probably among the wiſe inſtitutions of Providence that great difficulties ſhould ſtill remain. For education is but an initiation into that life of trial to which we are introduced on our entrance into this world. It is the firſt breaking-in to that ſtate of toil and labour to which we are born, and to which ſin has made us liable; and in this view of the ſubject the pains taken in the acquiſition of learning may be converted to higher uſes than ſuch as are purely literary.

Will it not be aſcribed to a captious ſingularity, if I venture to remark that real knowledge and real piety, though they may have gained in many inſtances, have ſuffered in others from that profuſion of little, amuſing, ſentimental books with which

which the youthful library overflows? Abundance has its dangers as well as ſcarcity. In the firſt place may not the multiplicity of theſe alluring little works increaſe the natural reluctance to thoſe more dry and unintereſting ſtudies, of which, after all, the rudiments of every part of learning *muſt* conſiſt? And ſecondly, is there not ſome danger (though there are many honourable exceptions) that ſome of thoſe engaging narratives may ſerve to infuſe into the youthful heart a ſort of ſpurious goodneſs, a confidence of virtue, a parade of charity? And that the benevolent actions with the recital of which they abound, when they are not made to flow from any ſource but feeling, may tend to inſpire a ſelf-complacency, a ſelf-gratulation, a "ſtand by, for I am "holier than thou?" May not the ſucceſs with which the good deeds of the little heroes are uniformly crowned; the invariable reward which is made the inſtant concomitant of well-doing, furniſh the young

young reader with falſe views of the condition of life, and the nature of the divine dealings with men? May they not help to ſuggeſt a falſe ſtandard of morals, to infuſe a love of popularity and an anxiety for praiſe, in the place of that ſimple and unoſtentatious rule of doing whatever good we do, *becauſe it is the will of God?* The univerſal ſubſtitution of this principle would tend to purify the worldly morality of many a popular little ſtory. And there are few dangers which good parents will more carefully guard againſt, than that of giving their children a mere political piety; that ſort of religion which juſt goes to make people more reſpectable, and to ſtand well with the world; a religion which is to ſave appearances without inculcating realities; a religion which affects to "preach peace and "good will to men," but which forgets to give "glory to God in the higheſt *."

There

* An ingenious (and in many reſpects uſeful) French Treatiſe on Education, has too much encouraged

There is a certain precocity of mind which is much helped on by these superficial modes of instruction; for frivolous reading will produce its correspondent effect, in much less time than books of solid instruction; the imagination being liable to be worked upon, and the feelings to be set a-going, much faster than the understanding can be opened and the judgment enlightened. A talent for conversation should be the result of instruction, not its precursor; it is a golden fruit when suffered to ripen gradually on the tree of knowledge; but if forced in the hot-bed of a circulating library, it will turn out worthless and vapid in proportion as it was artificial and premature. Girls who have

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couraged this political piety; by considering religion as a thing of human convention, rather than of divine institution; as a thing creditable, rather than commanded: by erecting the doctrine of expediency in the room of Christian simplicity; and wearing away the spirit of truth, by the substitution of occasional deceit, equivocation, subterfuge, and mental reservation.

been

been accuſtomed to devour a multitude of frivolous books, will converſe and write with a far greater appearance of ſkill as to ſtyle and ſentiment at twelve or fourteen years old, than thoſe of a more advanced age who are under the diſcipline of ſeverer ſtudies; but the former having early attained to that low ſtandard which had been held out to them, become ſtationary; while the latter, quietly progreſſive, are paſſing through juſt gradations to a higher ſtrain of mind; and thoſe who early begin with talking and writing like women, commonly end with thinking and acting like children.

I would not however prohibit ſuch works of imagination as ſuit this early period. When moderately uſed they ſerve to ſtretch the faculties and expand the mind; but I ſhould prefer works of vigorous genius and pure unmixed fable to many of thoſe tame and more affected moral ſtories, which are not grounded on Chriſtian principle. I ſhould ſuggeſt the uſe on

the one hand of original and acknowleged fictions; and on the other, of accurate and simple facts; so that truth and fable may ever be kept separate and distinct in the mind. There is something that kindles fancy, awakens genius, and excites new ideas in many of the bold fictions of the East. And there is one peculiar merit in the Arabian and some other oriental tales, which is, that they exhibit striking, and in many respects faithful views of the manners, habits, customs, and religion of their respective countries; so that some tincture of real local information is acquired by the perusal of the wildest fable, which will not be without its uses in aiding the future associations of the mind in all that relates to Eastern history and literature.

The irregular fancy of women is not sufficiently subdued by early application, nor tamed by labour, and the kind of knowledge they commonly do acquire is easily attained; and being chiefly some slight acquisition of the memory, something which

which is given them to get off by themſelves, and not grounded in their minds by comment and converſation, it is eaſily loſt. The ſuperficial *queſtion*-and-*anſwer*-way, for inſtance, in which they often learn hiſtory, furniſhes the mind with little to lean on: the events being detached and ſeparated, the actions having no links to unite them with each other; the characters not being interwoven by mutual relation; the chronology being reduced to diſconnected dates, inſtead of preſenting an unbroken ſeries; of courſe, neither events, actions, characters, nor chronology, faſten themſelves on the underſtanding, but rather float in the memory as ſo many detached epiſodes, than contribute to form the mind and to enrich the judgment of the reader, in the important ſcience of men and manners.

The ſwarms of *Abridgments*, *Beauties*, and *Compendiums*, which form too conſiderable a part of a young lady's library, may be conſidered in many inſtances as an infallible

infallible receipt for making a superficial mind. The *names* of the renowned characters in history thus become familiar in the mouths of those who can neither attach to the ideas of the person, the series of his actions, nor the peculiarities of his character. A few fine passages from the poets (passages perhaps which derived their chief beauty from their position and connection) are huddled together by some extract-maker, whose brief and disconnected patches of broken and discordant materials, while they inflame young readers with the vanity of reciting, neither fill the mind nor form the taste: and it is not difficult to trace back to their shallow sources the hackney'd quotations of certain *accomplished* young ladies, who will be frequently found not to have come legitimately by any thing they know. I mean not to have drawn it from its true spring, the original works of the author from which some *beauty-monger* has severed it. Human inconsistency in this, as in other cases,

caſes, wants to combine two irreconcileable things; it ſtrives to unite the reputation of knowledge with the pleaſures of idleneſs, forgetting that nothing that is valuable can be obtained without ſacrifices, and that if we would purchaſe knowlege, we muſt pay for it the fair and lawful price of time and induſtry. For this extract-reading, while it accommodates itſelf to the convenience, illuſtrates the character, of the age in which we live. The appetite for pleaſure, and that love of eaſe and indolence which is generated by it, leave little time or taſte for ſound improvement; while the vanity, which is equally a characteriſtic of the exiſting period, puts in its claim alſo for indulgence, and contrives to figure away by theſe little ſnatches of ornamental reading, caught in the ſhort intervals of ſucceſſive amuſements.

Beſides, the taſte, thus pampered with delicious morſels, is early vitiated. The young reader of theſe *cluſtered beauties* conceives a diſreliſh for every thing which

is plain, and grows impatient, if obliged to get through thoſe equally neceſſary though leſs ſhowy parts of a work, in which perhaps the author gives the beſt proof of his judgment by keeping under that occaſional brilliancy and incidental ornament, of which theſe ſuperficial ſtudents are in conſtant purſuit. In all well-written books, there is much that is good which is not dazzling; and theſe ſhallow critics ſhould be taught, that it is for the embelliſhment of the more tame and unintereſting parts of his work, that the judicious poet commonly reſerves thoſe flowers, whoſe beauty is defaced when they are plucked from the garland into which he had ſo ſkilfully woven them.

The remark, however, as far as it relates to abridgments, is by no means of general application; there are many valuable works which from their bulk would be almoſt inacceſſible to a great number of readers, and a conſiderable part of which may not be generally uſeful. Even in the

beſt written books there is often ſuperfluous matter; authors are apt to get enamoured of their ſubject, and to dwell too long on it: every perſon cannot find time to read a longer work on any ſubject, and yet it may be well for them to know ſomething on almoſt every ſubject; thoſe, therefore, who abridge voluminous works judiciouſly, render ſervice to the community. But there ſeems, if I may venture the remark, to be a miſtake in the *uſe* of abridgments. They are put ſyſtematically into the hands of *youth*, who have, or ought to have, leiſure for the works at large; while abridgments ſeem more immediately calculated for perſons in more advanced life, who wiſh to recall ſomething they had forgotten; who want to reſtore old ideas rather than acquire new ones; or they are uſeful for perſons immerſed in the buſineſs of the world, who have little leiſure for voluminous reading: they are excellent to refreſh the mind, but not competent to form it: they ſerve to bring

back

back what had been formerly known, but do not ſupply a fund of knowledge.

Perhaps there is ſome analogy between the mental and bodily conformation of women. The inſtructor therefore ſhould imitate the phyſician. If the latter preſcribe bracing medicines for a body of which delicacy is the diſeaſe, the former would do well to prohibit relaxing reading for a mind which is already of too ſoft a texture, and ſhould ſtrengthen its feeble tone by invigorating reading.

By ſoftneſs, I cannot be ſuppoſed to mean imbecility of underſtanding, but natural ſoftneſs of heart, and pliancy of temper, together with that indolence of ſpirit which is foſtered by indulging in ſeducing books, and in the general habits of faſhionable life.

I mean not here to recommend books which are immediately religious, but ſuch as exerciſe the reaſoning faculties, teach the mind to get acquainted with its own nature, and to ſtir up its own powers.

Let not a timid young lady ſtart if I ſhould venture to recommend to her, after a proper courſe of preparatory reading, to ſwallow and digeſt ſuch ſtrong meat as Watts's or Duncan's little book of Logic, ſome parts of Mr. Locke's Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding, and Biſhop Butler's Analogy. Where there is leiſure, and capacity, and an able friend to comment and to counſel, works of this nature might be profitably ſubſtituted in the place of ſo much Engliſh Sentiment, French Philoſophy, Italian Love-Songs, and fantaſtic German imagery and magic wonders. While ſuch enervating or abſurd books ſadly diſqualify the reader for ſolid purſuit or vigorous thinking, the ſtudies here recommended would act upon the conſtitution of the mind as a kind of alterative, and, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, would help to brace the intellectual ſtamina.

This ſuggeſtion is, however, by no means intended to exclude works of taſte

and imagination, which muſt always make the ornamental part, and of courſe a very conſiderable part, of female ſtudies. It is only intimated, that they ſhould not form them entirely and excluſively. For what is called dry tough reading, independent of the knowledge it conveys, is uſeful as an habit, and wholeſome as an exerciſe. Serious ſtudy ſerves to harden the mind for more trying conflicts; it lifts the reader from ſenſation to intellect; it abſtracts her from the world and its vanities; it fixes a wandering ſpirit, and fortifies a weak one; it divorces her from matter; it corrects that ſpirit of trifling which ſhe naturally contracts from the frivolous turn of female converſation and the petty nature of female employments; it concentrates her attention, aſſiſts her in a habit of excluding trivial thoughts, and thus even helps to qualify her for religious purſuits. Yes, I repeat it, there is to woman a Chriſtian uſe to be made of ſober ſtudies; while books of an oppoſite caſt, however

unexceptionable they may be ſometimes found in point of expreſſion, however free from evil in its more groſs and palpable ſhapes, yet from their very nature and conſtitution they excite a ſpirit of relaxation, by exhibiting ſcenes and ſuggeſting ideas which ſoften the mind and ſet the fancy at work; they take off wholeſome reſtraints, diminiſh ſober-mindedneſs, impair the general powers of reſiſtance, and at beſt feed habits of improper indulgence, and nouriſh a vain and viſionary indolence, which lays the mind open to error and the heart to ſeduction.

Women are little accuſtomed to cloſe reaſoning on any ſubject; ſtill leſs do they inure their minds to conſider particular parts of a ſubject; they are not habituated to turn a truth round, and view it in all its varied aſpects and poſitions; and this perhaps is one cauſe (as will be obſerved in another * place) of the too great confi-

* Chapter on Converſation.

dence

dence they are diſpoſed to place in their own opinions. Though their imagination is already too lively, and their judgment naturally incorrect; in educating them we go on to ſtimulate the imagination, while we neglect the regulation of the judgment. They already want ballaſt, and we make their education conſiſt in continually crowding more ſail than they can carry. Their intellectual powers being ſo little ſtrengthened by exerciſe, makes every petty buſineſs appear a hardſhip to them: whereas ſerious ſtudy would be uſeful, were it only that it leads the mind to the habit of conquering difficulties. But it is peculiarly hard to turn at once from the indolent repoſe of light reading, from the concerns of mere animal life, the objects of ſenſe, or the frivolouſneſs of female chit chat; it is peculiarly hard, I ſay, to a mind ſo ſoftened, to reſcue itſelf from the dominion of ſelf-indulgence, to reſume its powers, to call home its ſcattered ſtrength, to ſhut out every foreign intru-

ſion, to force back a ſpring ſo unnaturally bent; and to devote itſelf to religious reading, to active buſineſs, to ſober reflection, to ſelf-examination. Whereas to an intellect accuſtomed to think at all, the difficulty of thinking ſeriouſly is obviouſly leſſened.

Far be it from me to deſire to make ſcholaſtic ladies or female dialecticians; but there is little fear that the kind of books here recommended, if thoroughly ſtudied, and not ſuperficially ſkimmed, will make them pedants or induce conceit; for by ſhewing them the poſſible powers of the human mind, you will bring them to ſee the littleneſs of their own; and ſurely to get acquainted with the mind, to regulate, to inform it; to ſhew it its own ignorance and its own nature, does not ſeem the way to puff it up. But let her who is diſpoſed to be elated with her literary acquiſitions, check the riſing vanity by calling to mind the juſt remark of Swift, "that after all her boaſted ac-

"quirements,

"quirements, a woman will, generally "ſpeaking, be found to poſſeſs leſs of "what is called learning than a common "ſchool-boy."

Neither is there any fear that this ſort of reading will convert ladies into authors. The direct contrary effect will be likely to be produced by the peruſal of writers who throw the generality of readers at ſuch an unapproachable diſtance as to check preſumption, inſtead of exciting it. Who are thoſe ever multiplying authors, that with unparalleled fecundity are overſtocking the world with their quick-ſucceeding progeny? They are NOVEL-WRITERS; the eaſineſs of whoſe productions is at once the cauſe of their own fruitfulneſs, and of the almoſt infinitely numerous race of imitators to whom they give birth. Such is the frightful facility of this ſpecies of compoſition, that every raw girl, while ſhe reads, is tempted to fancy that ſhe can alſo write. And as Alexander, on peruſing the Iliad, found by congenial ſympathy the

the image of Achilles ſtamped on his own ardent ſoul, and felt himſelf the hero he was ſtudying; and as Corregio, on firſt beholding a picture which exhibited the perfection of the graphic art, prophetically felt all his own future greatneſs, and cried out in rapture, "And I too am a painter!" ſo a thorough-paced novel-reading Miſs, at the cloſe of every tiſſue of hackney'd adventures, feels within herſelf the ſtirring impulſe of correſponding genius, and triumphantly exclaims, "And I too am an "author!" The glutted imagination ſoon overflows with the redundance of cheap ſentiment and plentiful incident, and by a ſort of arithmetical proportion, is enabled by the peruſal of any three novels, to produce a fourth; till every freſh production, like the prolific progeny of Banquo, is followed by

Another, and another, and another!

Is a lady, however deſtitute of talents, education, or knowledge of the world, whoſe ſtudies have been completed by a circu-

lating

lating library, in any diſtreſs of mind? the writing a novel ſuggeſts itſelf as the beſt ſoother of her ſorrows! Does ſhe labour under any depreſſion of circumſtances? writing a novel occurs as the readieſt receipt for mending them! And ſhe ſolaces her imagination with the conviction that the ſubſcription which has been extorted by her importunity, or given to her neceſſities, has been offered as an homage to her genius. And this confidence inſtantly levies a freſh contribution for a ſucceeding work. Capacity and cultivation are ſo little taken into the account, that writing a book ſeems to be now conſidered as the only ſure reſource which the idle and the illiterate have always in their power.

May the Author be indulged in a ſhort digreſſion while ſhe remarks, though rather out of its place, that the corruption occaſioned by theſe books has ſpread ſo wide, and deſcended ſo low, as to have become one of the moſt univerſal, as well as moſt

pernicious, ſources of corruption among us. Not only among milliners, mantua-makers, and other trades where numbers work together, the labour of one girl is frequently ſacrificed that ſhe may be ſpared to read thoſe miſchievous books to the others; but ſhe has been aſſured by clergymen who have witneſſed the fact, that they are procured and greedily read in the wards of our hoſpitals! an awful hint, that thoſe who teach the poor to read, ſhould not only take care to furniſh them with principles which will lead them to abhor corrupt books, but that they ſhould alſo furniſh them with ſuch books as ſhall ſtrengthen and confirm their principles *. And let every

* The above facts furniſh no argument on the ſide of thoſe who would keep the poor in ignorance. Thoſe who cannot *read* can *hear*, and are likely to hear to worſe purpoſe than thoſe who have been better taught. And that ignorance furniſhes no ſecurity for integrity either in morals or politics, the late revolts in more than one country, remarkable for

every Chriſtian remember, that there is no other way of entering truly into the ſpirit of that divine prayer, which petitions that the name of God may be "hallowed," that "his kingdom (of grace) may come," and

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for the ignorance of the poor, fully illuſtrate. It is earneſtly hoped that the above facts may tend to impreſs ladies with the importance of ſuperintending the inſtruction of the poor, and of making it an indiſpenſable part of their charity to give them moral and religious books.

The late celebrated Henry Fielding (a man not likely to be ſuſpected of over-ſtrictneſs) aſſured a particular friend of the Author, that during his long adminiſtration of juſtice in Bow-Street, only *ſix* Scotchmen were brought before him. The remark did not proceed from any national partiality in the magiſtrate, but was produced by him in proof of the effect of a ſober and religious education among the lower ranks, on their morals and conduct.

See farther the ſentiments of a ſtill more celebrated cotemporary on the duty of inſtructing the poor.——"We have been taught that the circum-"ſtance of the Goſpel's being preached to the poor "was one of the ſureſt teſts of its miſſion. We "think, therefore, that thoſe do not believe it who "donot take care it ſhould be preached to the poor."

Burke on the French Revolution.

that

that "his will may be done on earth as it "is in heaven," than by each individual contributing according to his meaſure to accompliſh the work for which he prays; for to pray that theſe great objects may be promoted, without contributing to their promotion by our exertions, our money, and our influence, is a palpable inconſiſtency.

CHAP. IX.

On the religious and moral use of history and geography.

WHILE every sort of useful knowledge should be carefully imparted to young persons, it should be imparted not merely for its own sake, but also for the sake of its subserviency to higher things. All human learning should be taught, not as an end, but a means; and in this view even a lesson of history or geography may be converted into a lesson of religion. In the study of history, the instructor will accustom the pupil not merely to store her memory with facts and anecdotes, and to ascertain dates and epochs; but she will accustom her also to trace effects to their causes, to examine the secret springs of action, and accurately to observe the operation

operation of the paſſions. It is only meant to notice here ſome few of the moral benefits which may be derived from a judicious peruſal of hiſtory; and from among other points of inſtruction, I ſelect the following*:

The ſtudy of hiſtory may ſerve to give a clearer inſight into the corruption of human nature:

* It were to be wiſhed that more hiſtorians reſembled the excellent Rollin in the religious and moral turn given to his writings of this kind.—But here may I be permitted to obſerve incidentally, (for it is not immediately analogous to my ſubject,) that there is one diſadvantage which attends the common practice of ſetting young ladies to read ancient hiſtory and geography in French or Italian, who have not been previouſly well grounded in the pronunciation of claſſical names of perſons and places in our own language. The foreign terminations of Greek and Roman names are often very different from the Engliſh, and where they are firſt acquired are frequently retained and adopted in their ſtead, ſo as to give an illiterate appearance to the converſation of ſome women who are not really ignorant. And this defective pronunciation is the more to be guarded againſt in the education of ladies who are not taught *quantity* as boys are.

It may help to ſhow the *plan* of Providence in the direction of events, and in the uſe of unworthy inſtruments:

It may aſſiſt in the *vindication* of Providence, in the common failure of virtue, and the frequent ſucceſs of vice:

It may lead to a diſtruſt of our own judgment:

It may contribute to our improvement in ſelf-knowledge.

But to prove to the pupil the important doctrine of human corruption from the ſtudy of hiſtory, will require a truly Chriſtian commentator in the friend with whom the work is peruſed. For, from the low ſtandard of right eſtabliſhed by the generality of hiſtorians, who erect ſo many perſons into good characters who fall ſhort of the true idea of Chriſtian virtue, the unaſſiſted reader will be liable to form very imperfect views of what is real goodneſs; and will conclude, as his author ſometimes does, that the true idea of human nature is to be taken from the

medium between his beſt and his worſt characters; without acquiring a juſt notion of that prevalence of evil, which, in ſpite of thoſe few brighter luminaries that here and there juſt ſerve to gild the gloom of hiſtory, tends abundantly to eſtabliſh the doctrine. It will indeed be continually eſtabliſhing itſelf by thoſe who, in peruſing the hiſtory of mankind, carefully mark the riſe and progreſs of ſin, from the firſt timid irruption of an evil thought, to the fearleſs accompliſhment of the abhorred crime in which that thought has ended: from the indignant queſtion, "Is thy ſervant a dog "that he ſhould do this great thing*?" to the perpetration of that very enormity of which the ſelf-acquitting delinquent could not endure the ſlighteſt ſuggeſtion.

In this connection may it not be obſerved, that young perſons ſhould be put on their guard againſt a too implicit belief in the flattering accounts which many

* 2 Kings, viii. 13.

voyage-

voyage-writers are fond of exhibiting of the virtue, amiablenefs, and benignity of fome of the countries newly difcovered by our circumnavigators; that they fhould learn to fufpect the fuperior goodnefs afcribed to the Hindoos, and particularly the account of the inhabitants of the Pellew Iflands? Thefe laft indeed have been reprefented as having almoft efcaped the univerfal taint of our common nature, and would feem by their purity to have fprung from another anceftor than Adam.

We cannot forbear fufpecting that thefe pleafing but fomewhat overcharged portraits of man, in his natural ftate, are drawn with the invidious defign, by counteracting the doctrine of human corruption, to degrade the value and even deftroy the neceffity of the Chriftian facrifice; by infinuating that uncultivated man is fo difpofed to rectitude as to fuperfede the occafion for that redemption which is profeffedly defigned for finners. That in

countries professing Christianity, very many are not Christians will be too readily granted. Yet to say nothing of the vast superiority of goodness in the lives of those who are really governed by Christianity, is there not something even in her reflex light which guides to greater purity many of those who do not profess to walk by it; I doubt much, if numbers of the unbelievers of a Christian country, from the sounder views and better habits derived incidentally and collaterally, as it were, from the influence of a Gospel, the truth of which however they do not acknowledge, would not start at many of the actions which these *heathen perfectionists* daily commit without hesitation.

The religious reader of general history will observe the controlling hand of Providence in the direction of events; in turning the most unworthy actions and instruments to the accomplishment of his own purposes. She will mark infinite Wisdom directing what appears to be casual oc-

currences,

currences, to the completion of his own plan. She will point out how causes seemingly the most unconnected, events seemingly the most unpromising, circumstances seemingly the most incongruous, are all working together for some final good. She will mark how national as well as individual crimes are often overruled to some hidden purpose far different from the intention of the actors: how Omnipotence can, and often does, bring about the best purposes by the worst instruments: how the bloody and unjust conqueror is but "the rod of his wrath," to punish or to purify his offending children: how "the "fury of the oppressor," and the sufferings of the oppressed, will one day, when the whole scheme shall be unfolded, vindicate His righteous dealings. She will explain to the less enlightened reader, how infinite Wisdom often mocks the insignificance of human greatness, and the shallowness of human ability, by setting aside instruments the most powerful and promising,

while He works by agents comparatively contemptible. But ſhe will carefully guard this doctrine of Divine Providence, thus working out his own purpoſes through the ſins of his creatures, and by the inſtrumentality of the wicked, by calling to mind, while the offender is but a tool in the hands of the great Artificer, "the "woe denounced againſt him by whom "the offence cometh!" She will explain how thoſe mutations and revolutions in ſtates which appear to us ſo unaccountable, and how thoſe operations of Providence which ſeem to us ſo entangled and complicated, all move harmoniouſly and in perfect order: that there is not an event but has its commiſſion; not a misfortune which breaks its allotted rank; not a trial which moves out of its appointed track. While calamities and crimes ſeem to fly in caſual confuſion, all is commanded or permitted; all is under the control of a wiſdom which cannot err, of a goodneſs which cannot do wrong.

To

To explain my meaning by a few inſtances. When the ſpirit of the youthful reader riſes in honeſt indignation at that hypocritical piety which divorced an unoffending Queen to make way for the lawful crime of our eighth Henry's marriage with Ann Boleyn; and when that indignation is increaſed by the more open profligacy which brought about the execution of the latter; the inſtructor will not loſe ſo fair an occaſion for unfolding how in the councils of the Moſt High the crimes of the King were overruled to the happineſs of the country; and how, to this inauſpicious marriage, from which the heroic Elizabeth ſprang, the Proteſtant religion owed its firm ſtability. This view of the ſubject will lead the reader to juſtify the providence of God without diminiſhing her abhorrence of the vices of the tyrant.

She will explain to her, how even the conqueſts of ambition, after having deluged a land with blood, involved the perpetrator

tor in guilt, and the innocent victim in ruin, may yet be made the instrument of opening to future generations the way to commerce, to civilization, to Christianity. She may remind her, as they are following Cæsar in his invasion of Britain, that whereas the conqueror fancied he was only gratifying his own inordinate ambition, extending the flight of the Roman Eagle, immortalizing his own name, and proving that "this world was made for Cæsar;" he was in reality becoming the effectual though unconscious instrument of leading a land of barbarians to civilization and to science: and was in fact preparing an island of Pagans to embrace the religion of Christ. She will inform her, that when afterwards the victorious country of the same Cæsar had made Judea a Roman province, and the Jews had become its tributaries, the Romans did not know, nor did the indignant Jews suspect, that this circumstance was operating to the con-

firmation

firmation of an event the moſt important the world ever witneſſed.

For when "Auguſtus ſent forth a decree "that all the world ſhould be taxed;" he vainly thought he was only enlarging his own imperial power, whereas he was acting in unconſcious ſubſervience to the decree of a higher Sovereign, and was helping to aſcertain by a public act the exact period of Chriſt's birth, and furniſhing a record of his extraction from that family from which it was predicted by a long line of Prophets that he ſhould ſpring. Herod's atrocious murder of the innocents has added an additional circumſtance for the confirmation of *our* faith; the incredulity of Thomas has ſtrengthened our belief; nay, the treachery of Judas, and the injuſtice of Pilate, were the human inſtruments employed for the ſalvation of the world.

The youth that is not thoroughly armed with Chriſtian principles, will be tempted to mutiny not only againſt the juſtice, but the

the very exiſtence of a ſuperintending Providence, in contemplating thoſe frequent inſtances which occur in hiſtory of the ill ſucceſs of the more virtuous cauſe, and the proſperity of the wicked. He will ſee with aſtoniſhment that it is Rome which triumphs, while Carthage, which had clearly the better cauſe, falls. Now and then indeed a Cicero prevails, and a Cataline is ſubdued: but often, it is Cæſar ſucceſsful againſt the ſomewhat juſter pretenſions of Pompey, and againſt the ſtill clearer cauſe of Cato. It is Octavius who triumphs, and it is over Brutus that he triumphs! It is Tiberius who is enthroned, while Germanicus falls!

Thus his faith in a righteous Providence at firſt view is ſtaggered, and he is ready to ſay, " Surely it is not God that governs " the earth!" But on a fuller conſideration, (and here the ſuggeſtions of a Chriſtian inſtructor are peculiarly wanted,) there will appear great wiſdom in this very confuſion of vice and virtue; for it is calculated

to

to ſend our thoughts forward to a world of retribution, the principle of retribution being ſo imperfectly eſtabliſhed in this. It is indeed ſo far common for virtue to have the advantage here, in point of happineſs at leaſt, though not of glory, that the courſe of Providence is ſtill calculated to prove that God is on the ſide of virtue; but ſtill, virtue is ſo often unſucceſsful, that clearly the God of virtue, in order that his work may be perfect, muſt have in reſerve a world of retribution. This confuſed ſtate of things therefore is juſt that ſtate which is moſt of all calculated to confirm the deeply conſiderate mind in the belief of a future ſtate: for if all here were even or very nearly ſo, ſhould we not ſay, "Juſtice is already ſatisfied, and there "*needs* no other world?" On the other hand, if vice always triumphed, ſhould we not then be ready to argue in favour of vice rather than virtue, and to *wiſh* for no other world?

It seems so very important to ground young persons in the belief that they will not inevitably meet in this world with reward and success according to their merit, and to habituate them to expect even the most virtuous attempts to be often, though not always disappointed, that I am in danger of tautology on this point. This fact is precisely what history teaches. The truth should be plainly told to the young reader; and the antidote to that evil, which mistaken and worldly people would expect to arise from divulging this discouraging doctrine is *faith*. The importance of faith therefore, and the necessity of it to real, unbending, and persevering virtue, is surely made plain by profane history itself. For the same thing which happens to states and kings, happens to private life and to individuals. Thus there is scarcely a page, even of Pagan History, which may not be made instrumental to the establishing of the truth of revelation: and it is only by such

a guarded mode of instruction that some of the evils attending on the study of ancient literature can be obviated.

Distrust and diffidence in our own judgment seems to be also an important instruction to be learnt from history. How contrary to all expectation do the events therein recorded commonly turn out! How continually is the most sagacious conjecture of human penetration baffled! and yet we proceed to foretel this consequence, and to predict that event from the appearances of things under our own observation, with the same arrogant certainty as if we had never been warned by the monitory annals of successive ages.

There is scarcely one great event in history which does not, in the issue, produce effects upon which human foresight could never have calculated. The success of Augustus against his country produced peace in many distant provinces, who thus ceased to be harassed and tormented by this oppressive republic. Could this effect have

been

been foreseen, it might have sobered the despair of Cato, and checked the vehemence of Brutus. In politics, in short in every thing except in morals and religion, all is, to a considerable degree, uncertain. This reasoning is not meant to show that Cato ought not to have *fought*, but that he ought not to have *desponded* even after the last battle; and certainly, even upon his own principles, ought not to have killed himself. It would be departing too much from my object to apply this argument, however obvious the application, against those who were driven to unreasonable distrust and despair by the late successes of a neighbouring nation.

But all knowledge will be comparatively of little value, if we neglect self-knowledge; and of self-knowledge history and biography may be made successful vehicles. It will be to little purpose that our pupils become accurate critics on the characters of others, while they remain ignorant of themselves; for while to those who exercise a habit of self-application a book of profane history

may be made an instrument of improvement in this difficult ſcience; ſo without ſuch an habit the Bible itſelf may, in this view, be read with little profit.

It will be to no purpoſe that the reader weeps over the fortitude of the Chriſtian hero, or the conſtancy of the martyr, if ſhe do not bear in mind that ſhe herſelf is called to endure her own common trials with ſomething of the ſame temper: if ſhe do not bear in mind that, to control irregular humours, and to ſubmit to the daily vexations of life, will require, though in a lower degree, the exertion of the ſame principle, and ſupplication for the aid of the ſame ſpirit which ſuſtained the Chriſtian hero in the trying conflicts of life, or the martyr in his agony at the ſtake.

May I be permitted to ſuggeſt a few inſtances, by way of ſpecimen, how both ſacred and common hiſtory may tend to promote ſelf-knowledge? And let me again remind the warm admirer of ſuffering piety under *extraordinary trials*, that if ſhe

now fail in the petty occaſions to which ſhe is actually called out, ſhe would not be likely to have ſtood in thoſe more trying occaſions which excite her admiration.

While ſhe is applauding the ſelf-denying ſaint who renounced his eaſe, or choſe to embrace death, rather than violate his duty, let her aſk herſelf if ſhe has never refuſed to ſubmit to the paltry inconvenience of giving up her company, or even altering her dinner-hour on a Sunday, though by this trifling ſacrifice her family might have been enabled to attend the public worſhip in the afternoon.

While ſhe reads with horror that Belſhazzar was rioting with his thouſand nobles at the very moment when the Perſian army was burſting through the brazen gates of Babylon; is ſhe very ſure that ſhe herſelf, in an almoſt equally imminent moment of public danger, has not been nightly indulging in every ſpecies of diſſipation?

When ſhe is deploring the inconſiſtency of the human heart, while ſhe contraſts in

Mark Anthony his bravery and contempt of eafe at one period, with his licentious indulgences at another; or while fhe laments over the intrepid foul of Cæfar, whom fhe had been following in his painful marches, or admiring in his contempt of death, now diffolved in diffolute pleafures with the enfnaring Queen of Egypt; let her examine whether fhe herfelf has never, though in a much lower degree, evinced fomething of the fame inconfiftency? whether fhe who lives perhaps an orderly, fober, and reafonable life during her fummer refidence in the country, does not plunge with little fcruple in the winter into all the moft extravagant pleafures of the capital? whether fhe never carries about with her an accommodating kind of religion, which can be made to bend to places and feafons, to climates and cuftoms, to times and circumftances; which takes its tincture from the fafhion without, and not its habits from the principle within; which is decent with the

 pious,

pious, fober with the orderly, and loofe with the licentious?

While fhe is admiring the generofity of Alexander in giving away kingdoms and provinces, let her, in order to afcertain whether fhe could imitate this magnanimity, take heed if fhe herfelf is daily feizing all the little occafions of doing good, which every day prefents to the affluent? *Her* call is not to facrifice a province; but does fhe facrifice an opera ticket? She who is not doing all the good fhe can under her prefent circumftances, would not do all fhe forefees fhe fhould, in imaginary ones, were her power enlarged to the extent of her wifhes.

While fhe is inveighing with patriotic indignation, that in a neighbouring metropolis thirty theatres were open every night in time of war and public calamity, is fhe very clear that in a metropolis which contains only three, fhe was not almoft conftantly at one of them in time of war and

and public calamity alſo? For though in a national view it may make a wide difference whether there be in the capital three theatres or thirty, yet, as the ſame perſon can only go to one of them at once, it makes but little difference as to the quantum of diſſipation in the individual. She who rejoices at ſucceſsful virtue in a hiſtory, or at the proſperity of a perſon whoſe intereſts do not interfere with her own, may exerciſe her ſelf-knowledge, by examining whether ſhe rejoices equally at the happineſs of every one about her; and let her remember ſhe does not rejoice at it in the true ſenſe, if ſhe does not labour to promote it. She who glows with rapture at a virtuous character in hiſtory, ſhould aſk her own heart, whether ſhe is equally ready to do juſtice to the fine qualities of her acquaintance, though ſhe may not particularly love them; and whether ſhe takes unfeigned pleaſure in the ſuperior talents, virtues, fame, and fortune of thoſe

 whom

whom ſhe profeſſes to love, though ſhe is eclipſed by them?

* * * * *

In like manner, in the ſtudy of geography and natural hiſtory, the attention ſhould be habitually turned to the goodneſs of Providence, who commonly adapts the various productions of climates to the peculiar wants of the reſpective inhabitants. To illuſtrate my meaning by one or two inſtances out of a thouſand. The reader may be led to admire the conſiderate goodneſs of Providence in having cauſed the ſpiry fir, whoſe ſlender foliage does not obſtruct the beams of the ſun, to grow in the dreary regions of the North, whoſe ſhivering inhabitants could ſpare none of its ſcanty rays; while in the torrid zone, the palm-tree, the plantane, and the banana, ſpread their umbrella leaves to break the almoſt intolerable fervors of a vertical ſun. How the camel, who is the

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ſole carrier of all the merchandiſe of Turkey, Perſia, Egypt, Arabia, and Barbary, who is obliged to tranſport his incredible burthens through countries in which paſture is ſo rare, can ſubſiſt twenty-four hours without food, and can travel, loaded, many days without water, through dry and duſty deſerts, which ſupply none; and all this, not from the habit, but from the conformation of the animal: for Naturaliſts make this conformity of powers to climates a rule of judgment in aſcertaining the native countries of animals, and always determine it to be that to which their powers and properties are moſt appropriate.

Thus the writers of natural hiſtory are perhaps unintentionally magnifying the operations of Providence, when they inſiſt that animals do not modify and give way to the influence of other climates; but here they too commonly ſtop; neglecting, or perhaps refuſing, to aſcribe to infinite goodneſs this wiſe and merciful accommo-

dation. And here the pious inſtructor will come in, in aid of their deficiency: for Philoſophers too ſeldom trace up cauſes, and wonders, and bleſſings to their Author. And it is peculiarly to be regretted that a late juſtly celebrated French Naturaliſt, who, though not famous for his accuracy, poſſeſſed ſuch diverſified powers of deſcription that he had the talent of making the drieſt ſubjects intereſting; together with ſuch a livelineſs of delineation, that his characters of animals are drawn with a ſpirit and variety rather to be looked for in an hiſtorian of men than of beaſts: it is to be regretted, I ſay, that this writer, with all his excellencies, is abſolutely inadmiſſible into the library of a young lady, both on account of his immodeſty and his impiety; and if in wiſhing to exclude him, it may be thought wrong to have given him ſo much commendation, it is only meant to ſhew that the author is not led to reprobate his principles from inſenſibility to his talents. The remark is rather made to

put

put the reader on remembering that no brilliancy of genius, no diversity of attainments, should ever be allowed as a commutation for defective principles and corrupt ideas *.

* Goldsmith's History of animated Nature has many references to a Divine Author. It is to be wished that some judicious person would publish a new edition of this work, purified from the indelicate and offensive parts.

CHAP. X.

On the use of definitions, and the moral benefits of accuracy in language.

"PERSONS having been accuſtomed from "their cradles to learn words before they "knew the ideas for which they ſtand, "uſually continue to do ſo all their lives, "never taking the pains to ſettle in their "minds the determined ideas which be-"long to them. This want of a preciſe "ſignification in their words, when they "come to reaſon, *eſpecially in moral* "*matters*, is the cauſe of very obſcure and "uncertain notions. They uſe theſe un-"determined words confidently, without "much troubling their heads about a "certain fixed meaning, whereby, beſides "the eaſe of it, they obtain this advantage, "that as in ſuch diſcourſe they are ſeldom

"in

" in the right, so they are as seldom to be " convinced that they are in the wrong, it " being just the same to go about to draw " those persons out of their mistakes, who " have no settled notions, as to dispossess " a vagrant of his habitation who has no " settled abode.——The chief end of lan- " guage being to be understood, words " serve not for that end when they do not " excite in the hearer the same idea which " they stand for in the mind of the " speaker *."

I have chosen to shelter myself under the broad sanction of the great Author here quoted, with a view to apply this rule in philology to a moral purpose; for it applies to the veracity of conversation as much as to its correctness; and as strongly recommends unequivocal and simple truth, as accurate and just expression. Scarcely any one perhaps has an adequate conception how much clear and correct expression favours the elucidation of truth;

* Locke.

and

and the ſide of truth is obviouſly the ſide of morals; it is in fact one and the ſame cauſe; and it is of courſe the ſame cauſe with that of true religion alſo.

It is therefore no worthleſs part of education, even in a religious view, to ſtudy the preciſe meaning of words, and the appropriate ſignification of language. To this end I know no better method than to accuſtom young perſons very early to a habit of *defining* common words and things; for, as definition ſeems to lie at the root of correctneſs, to be accuſtomed to define Engliſh words in Engliſh, would improve the underſtanding more than barely to know what thoſe words are called in French, Italian, or Latin. Or rather, one uſe of learning other languages is, becauſe definition is often involved in etymology; that is, ſince many Engliſh words take their derivation from foreign or ancient languages, they cannot be ſo accurately underſtood without ſome knowledge of thoſe languages: but pre-

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cision of any kind, either moral or philological, too seldom finds its way into the education of women.

It is perhaps going out of my province to observe, that it might be well if young *men* also, before they entered on the world, were to be furnished with correct definitions of certain words, the use of which is become rather ambiguous; or rather they should be instructed in the *double sense* of modern phraseology. For instance; they should be provided with a good definition of the word *honour* in the fashionable sense, shewing what vices it includes, and what virtues it does not include: the term *good company*, which even the courtly Petronius of our days has defined as sometimes including not a few immoral and disreputable characters: *religion*, which in the various senses assigned it by the world, sometimes means superstition, sometimes fanaticism, and sometimes a mere disposition to attend on any kind of form of worship: the word *goodness*, which is made to mean every thing that

that is not notoriously bad; and sometimes even that too, if what is notoriously bad be accompanied by good humour, pleasing manners, and a little alms-giving. By these means they would go forth armed against many of the false opinions which, through the abuse or ambiguous meaning of words, pass so current in the world.

But to return to the youthful part of that sex which is the more immediate object of this little work. With correct definition they should also be taught to study the shades of words, and this not merely with a view to accuracy of expression, though even that involves both sense and elegance, but with a view to moral truth.

It may be thought ridiculous to assert, that morals have any connection with the purity of language, or that the precision of truth may be violated through defect of critical exactness in the three degrees of comparison: yet how frequently do we hear from the dealers in superlatives, of "most admirable, super-excellent, and

"quite perfect" people, who, to plain persons, not bred in the school of exaggeration, would appear mere common characters, not rising above the level of mediocrity! By this negligence in the just application of words, we shall be as much misled by these trope and figure ladies, when they degrade as when they panegyrize; for to a plain and sober judgment, a tradesman may not be "the "most good-for-nothing fellow that ever "existed," merely because it was impossible for him to execute in an hour an order which required a week; a lady may not be "the most hideous fright the world ever "saw," though the make of her gown may have been obsolete for a month; nor may one's young friend's father be "a "monster of cruelty," though he may be a quiet gentleman who does not choose to live at watering-places, but likes to have his daughter stay at home with him in the country.

Of all the parts of speech the interjection is the moſt abundantly in uſe with the hyperbolical fair ones. Would it could be added that theſe emphatical expletives (if I may make uſe of a contradictory term) were not ſometimes tinctured with profaneneſs! Though I am perſuaded that idle habit is often more at the bottom of this deep offence than intended impiety, yet there is ſcarcely any error of youthful talk which merits ſeverer caſtigation. And an habit of exclamation ſhould be rejected by poliſhed people as vulgar, even if it were not abhorred as profane.

The habit of exaggerating trifles, together with the grand female failing of exceſſive mutual flattery, and elaborate general profeſſions of fondneſs and attachment, is inconceivably cheriſhed by the voluminous private correſpondences in which ſome girls are indulged. In vindication of this practice it is pleaded that a facility of

ſtyle, and an eaſy turn of expreſſion, are acquiſitions to be derived from an early interchange of ſentiments by letter-writing; but even if it were ſo, theſe would be dearly purchaſed by the ſacrifice of that truth, and ſobriety of ſentiment, that correctneſs of language, and that ingenuous ſimplicity of character and manners ſo lovely in female youth.

Next to pernicious reading, imprudent and violent friendſhips are the moſt dangerous ſnares to this ſimplicity. And boundleſs correſpondences with different confidantes, whether they live in a diſtant province, or, as it often happens, in the ſame ſtreet, are the fuel which principally feeds this dangerous flame of youthful ſentiment. In thoſe correſpondences the young friends often encourage each other in the falſeſt notions of human life, and the moſt erroneous views of each other's character. Family affairs are divulged, and family faults aggravated. Vows of everlaſting attachment and excluſive fond-

neſs are in a pretty juſt proportion beſtowed on every friend alike. Theſe epiſtles overflow with quotations from the moſt paſſionate of the dramatic poets; and paſſages wreſted from their natural meaning, and preſſed into the ſervice of ſentiment, are, with all the violence of miſapplication, compelled to ſuit the caſe of the heroic tranſcriber.

But antecedent to this *epiſtolary period* of life, they ſhould have been accuſtomed to the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs in whatever they relate. They ſhould maintain the moſt critical accuracy in *facts*, in *dates*, in *numbering*, in *deſcribing*, in ſhort, in whatever pertains, either directly or indirectly, cloſely or remotely, to the great fundamental principle, *Truth.* It is ſo very difficult for perſons of great liveIineſs to reſtrain themſelves within the ſober limits of ſtrict veracity, either in their aſſertions or narrations, eſpecially when a little undue indulgence of fancy is apt to procure for them the praiſe of genius and ſpirit, that

that this reſtraint is one of the earlieſt principles which ſhould be worked into the youthful mind.

The converſation of young females is alſo in danger of being overloaded with epithets. As in the warm ſeaſon of youth hardly any thing is ſeen in the true point of viſion, ſo hardly any thing is named in naked ſimplicity; and the very ſenſibility of the feelings is partly a cauſe of the extravagance of the expreſſion. But here, as in other points, the ſacred writers, particularly of the New Teſtament, preſent us with the pureſt models; and its natural and unlaboured ſtyle of expreſſion is perhaps not the meaneſt evidence of the truth of the Goſpel. There is throughout the whole narratives, no overcharged character, no elaborate deſcription, nothing ſtudiouſly emphatical, as if truth of itſelf were weak, and wanted to be helped out. There is little panegyric, and leſs invective; none but on great, and awful, and juſti-

ſiable occaſions.. The authors record their own faults with the ſame honeſty as if they were the faults of other men, and the faults of other men with as little amplification as if they were their own. There is perhaps no book in which adjectives are ſo ſparingly uſed. A modeſt ſtatement of the fact, with no colouring and little comment, with little emphaſis and no varniſh, is the example held out to us for correcting the exuberances of paſſion and of language, by that divine volume which furniſhes us with the ſtill more important rule of faith and ſtandard of practice. Nor is the truth lowered by any feebleneſs, nor is the ſpirit diluted, nor the impreſſion weakened by this ſoberneſs and moderation; for with all this plainneſs there is ſo much force, with all this ſimplicity there is ſo much energy, that a few ſlight touches and artleſs ſtrokes of Scripture characters convey a ſtronger outline of the perſon delineated, than is ſometimes given by the

moſt elaborate and finiſhed portrait of more artificial hiſtorians.

If it be objected to this remark, that many parts of the ſacred writings abound in a lofty, figurative, and even hyperbolical ſtyle; this objection applies chiefly to the writings of the Old Teſtament, and to the prophetical and poetical parts of that. But the metaphorical and florid ſtyle of thoſe writings is diſtinct from the inaccurate and over-ſtrained expreſſion we have been cenſuring; for that only is inaccuracy which leads to a falſe and inadequate conception in the reader or hearer. The lofty ſtyle of the Eaſtern, and of other heroic poetry, does not ſo miſlead; for the metaphor is underſtood to be a metaphor, and the imagery is underſtood to be ornamental. The ſtyle of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament is not, it is true, plain in oppoſition to figurative; nor ſimple in oppoſition to florid; but it is plain and ſimple in the beſt ſenſe, as oppoſed to falſe principles and falſe taſte; it raiſes no wrong idea;

idea; it gives an exact impreſſion of the thing it means to convey; and its very tropes and figures, though bold, are never unnatural or affected: when it embelliſhes it does not miſlead; even when it exaggerates, it does not miſrepreſent; if it be hyperbolical, it is ſo either in compliance with the genius of Oriental language, or in compliance with contemporary cuſtoms, or becauſe the ſubject is one which will be moſt forcibly impreſſed by a ſtrong figure. The loftineſs of the expreſſion deducts nothing from the weight of the circumſtance; the imagery animates the reader without miſleading him; the boldeſt illuſtration, while it dilates his conception of the ſubject, detracts nothing from its exactneſs; and the divine ſpirit, inſtead of ſuffering truth to be injured by the opulence of the figures, contrives to make them freſh and varied avenues to the heart and the underſtanding.

CHAP. XI.

On Religion.—The neceſſity and duty of early inſtruction ſhewn by analogy with human learning.

It has been the faſhion of our late innovators in philoſophy, who have written ſome of the moſt brilliant and popular treatiſes on education, to decry the practice of early inſtilling religious knowledge into the minds of children. In vindication of this opinion it has been alleged, that it is of the utmoſt importance to the cauſe of truth, that the mind of man ſhould be kept free from prepoſſeſſions; and in particular, that every one ſhould be left to form ſuch judgment on religious ſubjects as may ſeem beſt to his own reaſon in maturer years.

This ſentiment has received ſome countenance from thoſe better characters who have

have wiſhed, on the faireſt principle, to encourage free inquiry in religion; but it has been puſhed to the blameable exceſs here cenſured, chiefly by the new philoſophers; who, while they profeſs only an ingenuous zeal for truth, are in fact ſlily endeavouring to deſtroy Chriſtianity itſelf, by diſcountenancing, under the plauſible pretence of free inquiry, all attention whatever to the religious education of our youth.

It is undoubtedly our duty, while we are inſtilling principles into the tender mind, to take peculiar care that thoſe principles be ſound and juſt; that the religion we teach be the religion of the Bible, and not the inventions of human error or ſuperſtition: that the principles we infuſe into others, be ſuch as we ourſelves have well ſcrutinized, and not the reſult of our credulity or bigotry; nor the mere hereditary, unexamined prejudices of our own undiſcerning childhood. It may alſo be granted, that it is the duty of every parent to inform the youth, that when his faculties

ſhall have ſo unfolded themſelves, as to enable him to examine for himſelf thoſe principles which the parent is now inſtilling, it will be his duty ſo to examine them.

But after making theſe conceſſions, I would moſt ſeriouſly inſiſt that there are certain leading and fundamental truths; that there are certain ſentiments on the ſide of Chriſtianity, as well as of virtue and benevolence, in favour of which every child *ought* to be prepoſſeſſed; and may it not be alſo added, that to expect to keep the mind void of all prepoſſeſſion, even upon any ſubject, appears to be altogether a vain and impracticable attempt? an attempt, the very ſuggeſtion of which argues much ignorance of human nature.

Let it be obſerved here, that we are not combating the infidel; that we are not producing evidences and arguments in favour of the truth of Chriſtianity, or trying to win over the aſſent of the reader to that which he diſputes; but that we are taking

taking it for granted, not only that Chriſtianity is true, but that we are addreſſing thoſe who believe it to be true: an aſſumption which has been made throughout this work. Aſſuming, therefore, that there are religious principles which are true, and which ought to be communicated in the moſt effectual manner, the next queſtion which ariſes ſeems to be, at what age and in what manner theſe ought to be inculcated? That it ought to be at an early period we have the command of Chriſt; who encouragingly ſaid, in anſwer to thoſe who would have repelled their approach, "Suffer *little* "children to come unto me."

But here conceding, for the ſake of argument, what yet cannot be conceded, that ſome good reaſons *may* be brought in favour of delay; allowing that ſuch impreſſions as are communicated early may not be very deep; allowing them even to become totally effaced by the ſubſequent corruptions of the heart and of the world; ſtill

ſtill I would illuſtrate the importance of early infuſing religious knowledge, by an alluſion drawn from the power of early habit in human learning. Put the caſe, for inſtance, of a perſon who was betimes initiated in the rudiments of claſſical ſtudies. Suppoſe him after quitting ſchool to have fallen, either by a courſe of idleneſs or of vulgar purſuits, into a total neglect of ſtudy. Should this perſon at any future period happen to be called to ſome profeſſion, which ſhould oblige him, as we ſay, to rub up his Greek and Latin; his memory ſtill retaining the unobliterated though faint traces of his early purſuits, he will be able to recover his neglected learning with leſs difficulty than he could now begin to learn; for he is not again obliged to ſet out with ſtudying the ſimple elements; they come back on being purſued; they are found on being ſearched for; the decayed images aſſume ſhape, and ſtrength, and colour; he has in his mind firſt principles to which to recur; the rules of gram-

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mar, which he has allowed himfelf to violate, he has not however forgotten; he will recall neglected ideas, he will refume flighted habits far more eafily than he could now begin to acquire new ones. I appeal to clergymen who are called to attend the dying beds of fuch as have been bred in grofs and ftupid ignorance of religion, for the juftnefs of this comparifon. Do they not find that thefe unhappy people have no ideas in common with them? that *they* therefore poffefs no intelligible medium by which to make themfelves underftood? that the perfons to whom they are addreffing themfelves have no firft principles to which they can be referred? that they are ignorant not only of the fcience, but the language of Chriftianity?

But at worft, whatever be the event of a pious education to the child, though in general we are encouraged from the tenor of Scripture and the courfe of experience, to hope that the event will be favourable, and that "when he is old he will not de-

"part

"part from it." Is it nothing for the parent to have acquitted himſelf of this prime duty? Is it nothing to him that he has obeyed the plain command of "training his child in the way he ſhould go?" And will not the parent who ſo acquits himſelf, with better reaſon and more lively hope, ſupplicate the Father of mercies for the reclaiming of a prodigal, who has wandered out of that right path in which he has ſet him forward, than for the converſion of a neglected creature, to whoſe feet the Goſpel had never been offered as a light? And how different will be the dying reflections even of that parent whoſe earneſt endeavours have been unhappily defeated by the ſubſequent and voluntary perverſion of his child, from his who will reaſonably aggravate his pangs, by transferring the ſins of his neglected child to the number of his own tranſgreſſions.

And to ſuch well-intentioned but ill-judging parents as really wiſh their children to be hereafter pious, but erroneouſly withhold

withhold inſtruction till the more advanced period preſcribed by the great maſter of ſplendid paradoxes* ſhall arrive; who can aſſure them, that while they are withholding the good ſeed, the great and ever vigilant enemy, who aſſiduouſly ſeizes hold on every opportunity which *we* ſlight, and cultivates every advantage which *we* neglect, may not be ſtocking the fallow ground with tares? Nay, who in this fluctuating ſcene of things can be aſſured, even if this were not certainly to be the caſe, that to them the promiſed period ever ſhall arrive at all? Who ſhall aſcertain to them that their now neglected child ſhall certainly live to receive the delayed inſtruction? Who can aſſure them that they themſelves will live to communicate it?

It is almoſt needleſs to obſerve that parents who are indifferent about religion, much more thoſe who treat it with ſcorn, are not likely to be anxious on this ſubject; it is therefore the attention of *religious*

* Rouſſeau.

parents

parents which is here chiefly called upon; and the more ſo, as there ſeems, on this point, an unaccountable negligence in many of theſe, whether it ariſe from indolence, falſe principles, or whatever other motive.

But independent of knowledge, it is ſomething, nay, let philoſophers ſay what they will, it is much, to give youth *pre-poſſeſſions* in favour of religion, to ſecure their *prejudices* on its ſide before you turn them adrift into the world; a world in which, before they can be completely armed with arguments and reaſons, they will be aſſailed by numbers whoſe pre-poſſeſſions and prejudices, far more than *their* arguments and reaſons, attach them to the other ſide. Why ſhould not the Chriſtian youth furniſh himſelf in the beſt cauſe with the ſame natural armour which the enemies of religion wear in the worſt? It is certain that to ſet out in life with ſen-timents in favour of the religion of our country is no more an error or a weakneſs, than to grow up with a fondneſs for our

country itſelf. If the love of our country be judged a fair principle, ſurely a Chriſtian who is "a citizen of no mean city," may lawfully have *his* attachments too. If patriotiſm be an honeſt prejudice, Chriſtianity is not a ſervile one. Nay, let us teach the youth to hug his prejudices, to glory in his prepoſſeſſions, rather than to acquire that verſatile and accommodating citizenſhip of the world, by which he may be an Infidel in Paris, a Papiſt at Rome, and a Muſſulman at Cairo.

Let me not be ſuppoſed ſo to elevate politics, or ſo to depreſs religion, as to make any compariſon of the value of the one with the other, when I obſerve, that between the true Britiſh patriot and the true Chriſtian, there will be this common reſemblance: the more deeply each of them inquires, the more will he be confirmed in his reſpective attachment, the one to his country, the other to his religion. I ſpeak with reverence of the immeaſurable diſtance; but the more the one

preſſes on the firm arch of our conſtitution, and the other on that of Chriſtianity, the ſtronger he will find them both. Each challenges ſcrutiny; each has nothing to dread but from ſhallow politicians and ſhallow philoſophers; in each intimate knowledge juſtifies prepoſſeſſion; in each inveſtigation confirms attachment.

If we divide the human being into three component parts, the bodily, the intellectual, and the ſpiritual, is it not reaſonable that a portion of care and attention be aſſigned to each in ſome degree adequate to its importance? Should I venture to ſay a *due* portion, a portion adapted to the real comparative value of each, would not that condemn in one word the whole ſyſtem of modern education? The rational and intellectual part being avowedly more valuable than the bodily, while the ſpiritual and immortal part exceeds even the intellectual ſtill more than that ſurpaſſes what is corporeal; is it acting according to the common rules of propor-

tion; is it acting on the principles of diſtributive juſtice; is it acting with that good ſenſe and right judgment with which the ordinary buſineſs of this world is uſually tranſacted, to give the larger proportion of time and care to that which is worth the leaſt? Is it fair that what relates to the body and the organs of the body, I mean thoſe accompliſhments which addreſs themſelves to the eye and the ear, ſhould occupy almoſt the whole thoughts; while the intellectual part ſhould be robbed of its due proportion, and the ſpiritual part ſhould have almoſt no proportion at all? Is not this preparing your children for an awful diſappointment in the tremendous day when they ſhall be ſtripped of that body, of thoſe ſenſes and organs, which have been made almoſt the ſole objects of their attention, and ſhall feel themſelves left in poſſeſſion of nothing but that ſpiritual part which in education was ſcarcely taken into the account of their exiſtence?

Surely

Surely it ſhould be thought a reaſonable compromiſe (and I am in fact under-valuing the object for the importance of which I plead) to ſuggeſt, that at leaſt two thirds of that time which is now uſurped by externals, ſhould be reſtored to the rightful owners, the underſtanding and the heart; and that the acquiſition of religious knowledge in early youth ſhould at leaſt be *no leſs* an object of ſedulous attention than the cultivation of human learning or of outward embelliſhments. It is alſo not unreaſonable to ſuggeſt, that we ſhould in Chriſtianity, as in arts, ſciences, or languages, begin with the beginning, ſet out with the ſimple elements, and thus "go on unto perfection."

Why in teaching to draw do you begin with ſtrait lines and curves, till by gentle ſteps the knowledge of outline and proportion be obtained, and your picture be completed; never loſing ſight, however, of the elementary lines and curves? why in muſic do you ſet out with the ſimple notes, and

pursue the acquisition through all its progress, still in every stage recurring to the notes? Why in the science of numbers do you invent the simplest methods of conveying just ideas of computation, still referring to the tables which involve the fundamental rules? Why in the science of quantity do men introduce the pupil at first to the plainest diagrams, and clear up one difficulty before they allow another to appear? Why in teaching languages to the youth do you sedulously infuse into his mind the rudiments of syntax? Why in parsing is he led to refer every word to its part of speech, to resolve every sentence into its elements, to reduce every term to its original, and from the first case of nouns, and the first tense of verbs, to explain their formations, changes, and dependencies, till the principles of language become so grounded, that, by continually recurring to the rules, speaking and writing correctly are fixed into a habit? Why all this, but because you uniformly

wiſh him to be grounded in each of his acquirements? why, but becauſe you are perſuaded that a ſlight, and ſlovenly, and ſuperficial, and irregular way of inſtruction will never train him to excellence in any thing?

Do young perſons then become muſicians, and painters, and linguiſts, and mathematicians by early ſtudy and regular labour; and ſhall they become Chriſtians by accident? or rather, is not this acting on that very principle of Dogberry, at which you probably have often laughed? Is it not ſuppoſing that religion, like "reading and writing, comes by Nature?" Shall all thoſe accompliſhments, "which "periſh in the uſing," be ſo aſſiduouſly, ſo ſyſtematically taught? Shall all thoſe habits, which are limited to the things of this world, be ſo carefully formed, ſo perſiſted in, as to be interwoven with our very make, ſo as to become as it were a part of ourſelves; and ſhall that knowledge which is to make us "wiſe unto ſalvation" be

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picked up at random, curſorily, or perhaps not picked up at all? Shall that difficult divine ſcience which requires "line upon "line, and precept upon precept," here a little and there a little; that knowledge which parents, even under a darker diſpenſation, were required "to teach their chil- "dren *diligently*, and to talk of it when "they ſat in their houſe, and when they "walked by the way, and when they lay "down, and when they roſe up;" ſhall this knowledge be by Chriſtian parents omitted or deferred, or taught ſlightly; or be ſuperſeded by things of comparatively little worth?

Shall the lively period of youth, the ſoft and impreſſible ſeaſon when laſting habits are formed, when the ſeal cuts deep into the yielding wax, and the impreſſion is more likely to be clear, and ſharp, and ſtrong, and laſting; ſhall this warm and favourable ſeaſon be ſuffered to ſlide by, without being turned to the great purpoſe for which not only youth, but life,

life, and breath, and being were beſtowed? Shall not that "faith without which it is "impoſſible to pleaſe God;" ſhall not that "holineſs without which no man can ſee "the Lord;" ſhall not that knowledge which is the foundation of faith and practice; ſhall not that charity without which all knowledge is "ſounding braſs and a "tinkling cymbal," be impreſſed, be inculcated, be enforced, as early, as conſtantly, as fundamentally, with the ſame earneſt puſhing on to continual progreſs, with the ſame conſtant reference to firſt principles, as are uſed in the caſe of thoſe arts which merely adorn human life? Shall we not ſeize the happy period when the memory is ſtrong, the mind and all its powers vigorous and active, the imagination buſy and all alive; the heart flexible, the temper ductile, the conſcience tender, curioſity awake, fear powerful, hope eager, love ardent; ſhall we not ſeize this period for inculcating that knowledge, and impreſſing thoſe principles which are to form the

 character,

character, and fix the destination for eternity?

I would now address myself to another and a still more dilatory class, who are for procrastinating all concern about religion till they are driven to it by actual distress, and who do not think of praying till they are perishing, like the sailor who said, "he thought it was always "time enough to begin to pray when the "storm began." Of these I would ask, shall we, with an unaccountable deliberation, defer our anxiety about religion till the busy man and the dissipated woman are become so immersed in the cares of life, or so entangled in its pleasures, that they will have little heart or spirit to embrace a new principle? a principle whose precise object it will be to condemn that very life in which they have already embarked; nay, to condemn almost all that they have been doing and thinking ever since they first began to act or think? Shall we, I say, begin now? or shall we suffer those instruc-

inſtructions, to receive which, requires all the concentrated powers of a ſtrong and healthy mind, to be put off till the day of excruciating pain, till the period of debility and ſtupefaction? Shall we wait for that ſeaſon, as if it were the moſt favourable for religious acquiſitions, when the ſenſes ſhall have been palled by exceſſive gratification, when the eye ſhall be tired with ſeeing, and the ear with hearing? Shall we, when the whole man is breaking up by diſeaſe or decay, expect that the dim apprehenſion will diſcern a new ſcience, or the obtuſe feelings delight themſelves with a new pleaſure? a pleaſure too, not only incompatible with many of the hitherto indulged pleaſures, but one which carries with it a ſtrong intimation that thoſe pleaſures terminate in the death of the ſoul.

But, not to loſe ſight of the important analogy on which we have already dwelt ſo much; how prepoſterous would it ſeem to you to hear any one propoſe to an illiterate dying

dying man, to ſet about learning even the plaineſt and eaſieſt rudiments of any new art; to ſtudy the muſical notes; to conjugate a verb; to learn, not the firſt problem in Euclid, but even the numeration table; and yet you do not think it abſurd to poſtpone religious inſtruction, on principles, which, if admitted at all, muſt terminate either in ignorance or in your propoſing too late to a dying man to begin to learn the totally unknown ſcheme of Chriſtianity. You do not think it impoſſible that he ſhould be brought to liſten to the "voice of this "charmer," when he can no longer liſten to "the voice of ſinging men and "ſinging women." You do not think it unreaſonable that immortal beings ſhould delay to devote their days to Heaven, till they have "no pleaſure in them" themſelves. You will not bring them to offer up the firſt fruits of their lips, and hearts, and lives, to their Maker, becauſe you perſuade yourſelves that he who has called

himſelf a "jealous God," may however be contented hereafter with the wretched ſacrifice of decayed appetites, and the worthleſs leavings of almoſt extinguiſhed affections.

We can ſcarcely believe, even with all the melancholy procraſtination we ſee around us, that there is any one, except he be a decided infidel, who does not conſider religion as at leaſt a good reverſionary thing; as an object which ought always to occupy a little remote corner of his map of life; the ſtudy of which, though it is always to be poſtponed, is however not to be finally rejected; which, though it cannot conveniently come into his preſent ſcheme of life, it is intended ſomehow or other to take up before death. This awful deception, this defect in the intellectual viſion, ariſes, partly from the bulk which the objects of time and ſenſe acquire in our eyes by their nearneſs; while the inviſible realities of eternity are but faintly diſcerned by a feeble faith,

faith, through a dim and diſtant medium. It ariſes alſo partly from a totally falſe idea of the nature of Chriſtianity, from a fatal fancy that we can repent at any future period, and that as amendment is a thing which will always be in our own power, it will be time enough to think of reforming our life, when we ſhould think only of cloſing it.

But depend upon it, that a heart long hardened, I do not mean by groſs vices merely, but by a fondneſs for the world, by an habitual and exceſſive indulgence in the pleaſures of ſenſe, will by no means be in a favourable ſtate to admit the light of divine truth, or to receive the impreſſions of divine grace. God indeed ſometimes ſhows us by an act of his ſovereignty, that this wonderful change, the converſion of a ſinner's heart, may be produced without the intervention of human means, to ſhow that the work is HIS. But as this is not the way in which the Almighty uſually deals with his creatures, it would be nearly

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as prepoſterous for men to act on this preſumption, and ſin on in hopes of a miraculous converſion, as it would be to take no means for the preſervation of their lives, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt raiſed Lazarus from the dead.

CHAP. XII.

On the manner of inſtructing young perſons in Religion.—General remarks on the genius of Chriſtianity.

I WOULD now with great deference addreſs thoſe reſpectable characters who are really concerned about the beſt intereſts of their children; thoſe to whom Chriſtianity is indeed an important conſideration, but whoſe habits of life have hitherto hindered them from giving it its due degree in the ſcale of education.

Begin then with conſidering that religion is a part, and the moſt prominent part, in your ſyſtem of inſtruction. Do not communicate its principles in a random deſultory way; nor ſcantily ſtint this buſineſs to only ſuch ſcraps and remnants of

of time as may be casually picked up from the gleanings of other acquirements. "Will you bring to God for a sacrifice "that which costs you nothing?" Let the best part of the day, which with most people is the earliest part, be steadily and invariably dedicated to this work by your children, before they are tired with their other studies, while the intellect is clear, the spirits light, and the attention sharp and unfatigued.

Confine not your instructions to mere verbal rituals and dry systems; but communicate them in a way which shall interest their feelings, by lively images, and by a warm practical application of what they read to their own hearts and circumstances. If you do not study the great but too much slighted art of fixing, of commanding, of chaining the attention, you may throw away much time and labour, with little other effect than that of disgusting your pupil and wearying yourself. There seems to be no good reason that while every

other

other thing is to be made amuſing, religion alone muſt be dry and uninviting. Do not fancy that a thing is good merely becauſe it is dull. Why ſhould not the moſt entertaining powers of the human mind be ſupremely conſecrated to that ſubject which is moſt worthy of their full exerciſe? The misfortune is, that religious learning is too often rather conſidered as an act of the memory than of the heart and affections; as a dry duty, rather than a lively pleaſure. The manner in which it is taught differs as much from their other learning as puniſhment from recreation. Children are turned over to the dull work of getting by rote as a taſk that which they ſhould get from example, from animated converſation, from lively diſcuſſion, in which the pupil ſhould learn to bear a part, inſtead of being merely a paſſive hearer. Teach them rather, as their Bleſſed Saviour taught, by intereſting parables, which, while they corrected the heart, left ſome exerciſe for the ingenuity in the ſolution, and for the feelings in

in their application. Teach, as HE taught, by ſeizing on ſurrounding objects, paſſing events, local circumſtances, peculiar characters, apt illuſions, juſt analogy, appropriate illuſtration. Call in all creation, animate and inanimate, to your aid, and accuſtom your young audience to

> Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in ſtones, and good in every thing.

Even when the nature of your ſubject makes it neceſſary for you to be more plain and didactic, do not fail frequently to enliven theſe leſs engaging parts of your diſcourſe with ſome incidental imagery which will captivate the fancy; with ſome affecting ſtory with which it ſhall be aſſociated in the memory. Relieve what would otherwiſe be too dry and preceptive, with ſome ſtriking exemplification in point, ſome touching inſtance to be imitated, ſome awful warning to be avoided; ſomething which ſhall illuſtrate your inſtruction, which ſhall realize your poſition; which

which ſhall embody your idea, and give ſhape and form, colour and life, to your precept. Endeavour unremittingly to connect the reader with the ſubject, by making her feel that what you teach is neither an abſtract truth, nor a thing of mere general information, but that it is a buſineſs in which *ſhe herſelf* is individually and immediately concerned; in which not only her eternal ſalvation but her *preſent* happineſs is involved. Do, according to your meaſure of ability, what the Holy Spirit which indited the Scriptures has done, always take the ſenſibility of the learner into your account of the faculties which are to be worked upon. "For the doc-"trines of the Bible," as the profound and enlightened Bacon obſerves, "are not "propoſed to us in a naked logical form, "but arrayed in the moſt beautiful and "ſtriking colours which creation affords." By thoſe affecting illuſtrations uſed by Him "who knew what was in man," and therefore beſt knew how to addreſs him, it

it was, that the unlettered audiences of Chriſt and his Apoſtles were enabled both to comprehend and to reliſh doctrines, which would not readily have made their way to their underſtandings, had they not firſt touched their hearts; and which would have found acceſs to neither the one nor the other, had they been delivered in dry ſcholaſtic diſquiſitions. Now, thoſe audiences not being learned, may be ſuppoſed to have been nearly in the ſtate of children, as to their receptive faculties, and to have required nearly the ſame ſort of inſtruction; that is, they were more capable of being moved with what was ſimple, and touching, and lively, than what was elaborate, abſtruſe, and unaffecting. Heaven and earth were made to furniſh their contributions, when man was to be taught that ſcience which was to make him wiſe unto ſalvation. Something which might enforce or illuſtrate was borrowed from every element. The appearances of the ſky, the ſtorms of the ocean, the birds of the

the air, the beaſts of the field, the fruits of the earth, the ſeed and the harveſt, the labours of the huſbandmen, the traffic of the merchant, the ſeaſons of the year! all were laid hold of in turn. And the moſt important moral inſtruction, or religious truth, was deduced from ſome recent occurrence, ſome natural appearance, ſome ordinary fact.

If that be the pureſt eloquence which moſt perſuades, and which comes home to the heart with the fulleſt evidence and the moſt irreſiſtible force, then no eloquence is ſo powerful as that of Scripture: and an intelligent Chriſtian teacher will be admoniſhed by the mode of Scripture itſelf, how to communicate its truths with life and ſpirit; "while he is muſing, the fire "burns:" that fire which will preſerve him from an inſipid and freezing mode of inſtruction. He will moreover, as was ſaid above, always carefully keep up a quick ſenſe of the perſonal intereſt the pupil has in every religious inſtruction which

which is impreſſed upon him. He will teach as Paul prayed, "with the ſpirit, "and with the underſtanding alſo;" and in imitating this great model, he will neceſſarily avoid the oppoſite faults of two different ſorts of inſtructors; for while ſome of our divines of the higher claſs have been too apt to preach as if mankind had only intellect, and the lower and more popular ſort as if they had only paſſions, let him borrow what is good from both, and addreſs his pupils as beings compounded of both underſtanding and affections *.

* The zeal and diligence with which the Biſhop of London's weekly lectures have been attended by perſons of all ranks and deſcriptions, but more eſpecially by that claſs to whom this little work is addreſſed, is a very promiſing circumſtance for the age. And while we conſider with pleaſure the advantages peculiarly to be derived by the young from ſo intereſting and animated an expoſition of the Goſpel, we are further led to rejoice at the countenance given by ſuch high authority to the revival of that excellent but too much neglected practice of lectures.

Fancy not that the Bible is too difficult and intricate to be preſented in its own naked form, and that it puzzles and bewilders the youthful underſtanding. In all needful and indiſpenſable points of knowledge, the darkneſs of Scripture, as a great Chriſtian philoſopher * has obſerved, "is but a partial darkneſs, like that "of Egypt, which benighted only the ene-"mies of God, while it left his children in "clear day." It is not pretended that the Bible will *find* in the young reader clear views of God and of Chriſt, of the ſoul and eternity, but that it will *give* them. And if it be really the appropriate character of Scripture, as it tells us itſelf that it is, "to enlighten the eyes of the *blind*," and "to make wiſe the *ſimple*," then it is as well calculated for the youthful and uninformed as for any other claſs; and as it was never expected that the greater part of Chriſtians ſhould be learned, ſo is learn-

* Mr. Boyle.

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ing, though of ineſtimable value in a *teacher* of theology, no *eſſential* qualification for a common Chriſtian: for which reaſon Scripture truths are expreſſed with that clear and ſimple evidence adapted to the kind of aſſent which they require; an aſſent materially different from that ſort of demonſtration which a mathematical theorem demands. He who could bring an unprejudiced heart and an unperverted will, would bring to the Scriptures the beſt qualification for underſtanding and receiving them. And though they contain things which the pupil cannot comprehend, (as what ancient poet, hiſtorian, or orator does not,) the teacher may addreſs to him the words which Chriſt addreſſed to Peter, "What I do thou knoweſt not now, but "thou ſhalt know hereafter."

Hiſtories of the bible, and commentaries on the bible, for the uſe of children, though valuable in their way, ſhould never be uſed as ſubſtitutes for the bible itſelf. For hiſtorical or geographical information, for

calling the attention to events and characters, they are very uſeful. But ſcripture truths are beſt conveyed in its own ſublime and ſimple phraſeology; its doctrines are beſt underſtood in its own appropriate language; its precepts are beſt retained in their own ſimple form. Paraphraſe, in profeſſing to explain, often dilutes; while the terſeneſs and brevity of ſcripture compoſition fills the mind, touches the heart, and faſtens on the memory. While I would cauſe them to "read" the commentary for the improvement of the underſtanding, they ſhould "mark, learn, "and inwardly digeſt" the bible for the comfort and edification of the heart.

Young people who have been taught religion in a formal and ſuperficial way, who have had all its drudgeries and none of its pleaſures, will probably have acquired ſo little reliſh for it, as to conſider the continued proſecution of their religious ſtudies as a badge of their tutelage, as a mark that they are ſtill under ſubjection; and

will look forward with impatience to the hour of their emancipation from the lectures on Chriſtianity, as the æra of their promiſed liberty; the epocha of independence. They will long for the period when its leſſons ſhall ceaſe to be delivered; will conclude that, having once attained ſuch an age, and arrived at the required proficiency, the object will be accompliſhed, and the labour at an end. But let not *your* children "ſo learn Chriſt." Apprize them that no ſpecific day will ever arrive on which they ſhall ſay, I *have* attained; but inform them, that every acquiſition muſt be followed up; knowledge muſt be increaſed; prejudices ſubdued; good habits rooted; evil ones eradicated; amiable diſpoſitions ſtrengthened; right principles confirmed; till going on from light to light, and from ſtrength to ſtrength, they come "to the meaſure of "the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt."

But though ſerious inſtruction will not only be unintereſting but irkſome, if conveyed

veyed to youth in a cold didactic way; yet if their affections be ſuitably engaged, while their underſtandings are kept in exerciſe, their hearts, ſo far from neceſſarily revolting, as ſome inſiſt, will often receive the moſt ſolemn truths with alacrity. It is, as we have repeated, the manner which revolts them, and not the thing. Nor will they, as ſome aſſert, neceſſarily diſlike the teacher, becauſe the truths taught are of the moſt awful and ſolemn kind. It has happened to the writer to be a frequent witneſs of the gratitude and affection expreſſed by young perſons to thoſe who had ſeduloufly and ſeriouſly inſtructed them in religious knowledge: an affection as lively, a gratitude as warm, as could have been excited by any indulgence to their perſons, or any gratification of a worldly nature.

As it is notorious that men of wit and ſprightly fancy have been the moſt formidable enemies to Chriſtianity; while men, in whom thoſe talents have been conſecrated

crated to God, have been ſome of her moſt uſeful champions, take particular care to preſs that ardent and ever-active power, the *imagination*, into the ſervice of religion. This bright and buſy faculty will be leading its poſſeſſor into perpetual peril, and is an enemy of peculiar potency till it come to be employed in the cauſe of God. It is a lion, which though worldly prudence indeed may *chain* ſo as to prevent outward miſchief, yet the malignity remains within; but when ſanctified by Chriſtianity, the imagination is a lion *tamed*; you have all the benefit of its ſtrength and its activity, diveſted of its miſchief. God never beſtowed that noble but reſtleſs faculty, without intending it to be an inſtrument of his own glory; though it has been too often ſet up in rebellion againſt him; becauſe, in its youthful ſtirrings, while all alive and full of action, it has not been ſeized upon to ſerve its rightful Sovereign, but was early inliſted with little oppoſition under the banners of the world,

world, the flesh, and the devil. Religion is the only subject in which, under the guidance of a severe and sober-minded prudence, this discursive faculty can safely stretch its powers and expand its energies. But let it be remembered, that it must be a sound and genuine Christianity which can alone so chastise and regulate the imagination, as to restrain it from those errors and excesses into which a false, a mistaken, an irregular religion, has too often led its injudicious and ill-instructed professor. Some of the most fatal extremes into which a wild enthusiasm or a frightful superstition has plunged its unhappy votaries, have been owing to the want of a due direction, to the want of a strict and holy castigation of this ever-working faculty. To secure imagination, therefore, on the safe side, and, if I may change the metaphor, to put it under the direction of its true pilot in the stormy voyage of life, is like engaging those potent

tent elements, the wind and tide, in your favour.

In your communications with young people, take care to convince them that as religion is not a bufinefs to be laid afide with the leffon, fo neither is it a fingle branch of duty; fome detached thing, which like the acquifition of an art or a language, is to be practifed feparately, and to have its diftinct periods and modes of operation. But let them underftand, that common acts, by the fpirit in which they are to be performed, are to be made acts of religion. Let them perceive that Chriftianity may be confidered as having fomething of that influence over the conduct which external grace has over the manners; for as it is not the performance of fome particular act which denominates any one to be graceful, grace being a fpirit diffufed through the whole fyftem, which animates every fentiment, and informs every action; as fhe who has true perfonal grace has it uniformly, and is not fome-

times

times awkward and ſometimes elegant; does not ſometimes lay it down and ſometimes take it up; ſo religion is not an occaſional act, but an indwelling principle, an inwrought habit, a pervading and informing ſpirit, from which indeed every act derives all its life, and energy, and beauty.

Give them clear views of the broad diſcrimination between practical religion and worldly morality; in ſhort, between the virtues of Chriſtians and of Pagans. Show them that no good qualities are genuine but ſuch as flow from the religion of Chriſt. Let them learn that the virtues which the better ſort of people, who yet are deſtitute of true Chriſtianity, inculcate and practiſe, reſemble thoſe virtues which have the love of God for their motive, juſt as counterfeit coin reſembles ſterling gold; they may have, it is true, certain points of reſemblance with the others; they may be bright and ſhining; they have perhaps the image and the ſuperſcription, but they ever want

the true diſtinguiſhing properties; they want ſterling value, purity, and weight. They may indeed paſs current in the traffic of this world, but when brought to the touchſtone, they will be found full of alloy; when weighed in the balance of the ſanctuary, "they will be found wanting;" they will not ſtand that final trial which is to ſeparate "the precious from the vile;" they will not abide the day "of *his* coming "who is like a refiner's fire."

One error into which even ſome good people are apt to fall, is that of endeavouring to deceive young minds by temporiſing expedients. In order to allure them to become religious, they exhibit falſe, or faint, or inadequate views of Chriſtianity; and while they repreſent it, as it really is, as a life of ſuperior happineſs and advantage, they conceal its difficulties, and like the Jeſuitical Chineſe miſſionaries, extenuate, or ſink, or deny, ſuch parts of it as are leaſt alluring to human pride. In attempting to diſguiſe its principle, they

deſtroy its efficacy. They deny the croſs inſtead of making it the badge of a Chriſtian. But beſides that, the project fails with them as it did with the Jeſuits; all fraud is bad in itſelf; and a pious fraud is a contradiction in terms which ought to be buried in the rubbiſh of papal deſolation.

Inſtead of repreſenting to the young Chriſtian, that it may be poſſible by a prudent ingenuity at once to purſue, with equal ardour and ſucceſs, worldly fame and eternal glory, would it not be more honeſt to tell him fairly and unambiguouſly that there are two diſtinct roads between which there is a broad boundary line? that there are two contending and irreconcileable intereſts? that he muſt forſake the one if he would cleave to the other? that "there are two maſters," both of whom it is impoſſible to ſerve? that there are two ſorts of characters at eternal variance? that he muſt renounce the one if he is in earneſt for the other? that nothing

ſhort of abſolute deciſion can make a confirmed Chriſtian? Point out the different ſorts of promiſes annexed to theſe different ſorts of characters. Confeſs in the language of Chriſt how the man of the world often obtains (and it is the natural courſe of human things) the recompence he ſeduloufly ſeeks. "Verily I ſay unto you they "have their reward." Explain the beatitudes on the other hand, and unfold what kind of ſpecific reward is there individually promiſed to its concomitant virtue. Show your pupil that to that "poverty of ſpirit" to which "the kingdom of heaven" is promiſed, it would be inconſiſtent to expect that the recompence of human commendation ſhould be alſo attached; that to that "purity of heart" to which the beatific viſion is annexed, it would be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe you can unite the praiſe of licentious wits, or the admiration of a catch-club. Theſe will be beſtowed on their appropriate and correſponding merits. Do not inliſt them under falſe colours; diſap-

pointment will produce defertion. Different forts of rewards are attached to different forts of fervices; and while you truly affert that religion's ways are "ways of "pleafantnefs, and all her paths are peace," take care that you do not lead them to depend too exclufively on worldly happinefs and earthly peace, for thefe make no part of the covenant; they may be, and they often are, fuperadded, but they were never ftipulated in the contract.

But if, in order to attract the young to a religious courfe, you difingenuoufly conceal its difficulties, while you are juftly enlarging upon its pleafures, you will tempt them to diftruft the truth of Scripture itfelf. For what will they think, not only of a few detached texts, but of the general caft and colour of the Gofpel when contrafted with your reprefentation of it? When you are defcribing to them the infeparable human advantages which will follow a religious courfe, what notion will they conceive of "the ftrait gate" and "narrow

"narrow way?" of the amputation of a "right hand?" of the excision of a "right "eye?" of the other strong metaphors by which the Christian warfare is shadowed out? of "crucifying the flesh?" of "mor-"tifying the old man?" of "dying unto "sin?" of "overcoming the world?" Do you not think their meek and compassionate Saviour who died for your children loved them as well as you love them? And if this were his language, ought it not to be yours? It is the language of true love; of that love with which a merciful God loved the world, when he spared not his own Son. Do not fear to tell your children what he told his Disciples, that "in the "world they shall have tribulation;" but teach them to rise superior to it, on *his* principle, by "overcoming the world." Do not then try to conceal from them, that the life of a Christian is necessarily opposite to the life of the world; and do not seek, by a vain attempt at accomodation, to reconcile that difference which

Chriſt himſelf has pronounced to be irreconcileable.*

May it not be partly owing to the want of a due introduction to the knowledge of the real nature and ſpirit of religion, that ſo many young Chriſtians, who ſet out in a fair and flouriſhing way, decline and wither when they come to perceive the requiſitions of experimental Chriſtianity? requiſitions which they had not ſuſpected of making any part of the plan; and from which, when they afterwards diſcover them, they ſhrink back, as not prepared and hardened for the unexpected conteſt.

People are no more to be cheated into religion than into learning. The ſame ſpirit which influences your oath in a court of juſtice ſhould influence your diſcourſe in that court of equity—your family. Your children ſhould be told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is unneceſſary to add, that it muſt be done gradually and diſcreetly. We know whoſe example we have for poſtponing

that which the mind is not yet prepared to receive: "I have many things yet to ſay "to you, but ye cannot bear them *now*." Accuſtom them to reaſon by analogy. Explain to them that great *worldly* attainments are never made without great ſacrifices; that the merchant cannot become rich without induſtry; the ſtateſman eminent without labour; the ſcholar learned without ſtudy; the hero renowned without danger: would it not then, on human principles, be unreaſonable to think that the Chriſtian alone ſhould obtain a triumph without a warfare? the higheſt prize with the loweſt exertions? an eternal crown without a preſent croſs? and that heaven is the only reward which the idle may reckon upon? No: though ſalvation "be "the *gift* of God," yet it muſt be "*worked* "*out*." Convince your young friends, however, that in this caſe the difficulty of the battle bears no proportion to the prize of the victory. In one reſpect, indeed, the point of reſemblance between worldly and

Chriſtian purſuits fails, and that moſt advantageouſly for the Chriſtian; for while, even by the moſt probable means, which are the union of talents with diligence, no human proſperity can be *inſured* to the worldly candidate; while the moſt ſucceſsful adventurer may fail by the fault of another; while the beſt concerted project of the ſtateſman may be cruſhed; the braveſt hero loſe the battle; the brighteſt genius fail of getting bread; and while, moreover, the pleaſure ariſing even from ſucceſs in theſe may be no ſooner taſted than it is poiſoned by a more proſperous rival; the perſevering Chriſtian is ſafe and certain of obtaining *his* object; no miſfortunes can defeat *his* hope; no competition can endanger *his* ſucceſs; for though another gain, he will not loſe; nay, the ſucceſs of another, ſo far from diminiſhing his gain, is an addition to it; the more he diffuſes, the richer he grows; his bleſſings are enlarged by communication; and that mortal hour which cuts off for ever the

hopes

hopes of worldly men, crowns and consummates his.

Beware at the same time of setting up any act of self-denial or mortification as the *procuring* cause of salvation. This would be a presumptuous project to *purchase* that eternal life which is declared to be the "free *gift* of God." This would be to send your children, not to the Gospel to learn their Christianity, but to the Monks and Ascetics of the middle ages; it would be sending them to Peter the Hermit, and the holy fathers of the Desert, and not to Peter the Apostle and his Divine Master. Mortification is not the price; it is nothing more than the discipline of a soul of which sin is the disease, the diet prescribed by the great physician. Without this guard the young devout Christian would be led to fancy that abstinence, pilgrimage, and penance might be adopted as the cheap substitute for the subdued desire, the resisted temptation,

the conquered corruption, and the obedient will; and would be almoſt in as much danger, on the one hand, of ſelf-righteouſneſs ariſing from auſterities and mortification, as ſhe would be, on the other, from ſelf-gratification in the indulgences of the world. And while you carefully impreſs on her the neceſſity of living a life of ſtrict obedience if ſhe would pleaſe God, do not neglect to remind her alſo that a complete renunciation of her own performances as a ground of merit, *purchaſing* the favour of God by their own intrinſic worth, is included in that obedience.

It is of the laſt importance, in ſtamping on young minds a true impreſſion of the genius of Chriſtianity, to poſſeſs them with a conviction that it is the purity of the motive which not only gives worth and beauty, but which, in a Chriſtian ſenſe, gives life and ſoul to the beſt action: nay, that while a right intention will be acknow-

acknowledged and accepted at the final judgment, even without the act, the act itself will be disowned which wanted the basis of a pure design. "Thou didst "well that it was in thy *heart* to build "me a temple," said the Almighty to that Monarch whom yet he permitted not to build it. How many splendid actions will be rejected in the great day of retribution, to which statues and monuments have been raised on earth, while their almost deified authors shall be as much confounded at their own unexpected reprobation, as at the divine acceptance of those "whose life the world counted madness." It is worthy of remark, that "Depart from "me, I never knew you," is not the malediction denounced on the sceptic or the scoffer, on the profligate, and the libertine, but on the high professor, on the unfruitful worker of "miracles," on the unsanctified utterer of "prophecies;" for even acts of piety wanting the purifying principle, however they may dazzle men, offend

offend God. Cain ſacrificed, Balaam propheſied, Rouſſeau wrote the moſt ſublime panegyric on the *Son of Mary*, VOLTAIRE BUILT A CHURCH! nay, ſo ſuperior was *his* affectation of ſanctity, that he oſtentatiouſly declared, that while others were raiſing churches to *Saints*, there was one man at leaſt who would erect *his* church to *God** : that God whoſe altars he was overthrowing, whoſe name he was vilifying, whoſe goſpel he was exterminating, and the very name of whoſe Son he had ſolemnly pledged himſelf to blot from the face of the earth!

Though it be impoſſible here to enumerate all thoſe Chriſtian virtues which ſhould be impreſſed in the progreſs of a Chriſtian education, yet in this connection I cannot forbear mentioning one which more immediately grows out of the ſubject; and to remark that the principle

* *Deo erexit Voltaire*, is the inſcription affixed by himſelf on his church at Ferney.

which

which ſhould be the invariable concomitant of all inſtruction, and eſpecially of religious inſtruction, is *humility*. As this temper is inculcated in every page of the Goſpel; as it is deducible from every precept and every action of Chriſt; that is a ſufficient intimation that it ſhould be made to grow out of every ſtudy, that it ſhould be grafted on every acquiſition. It is the turning point, the leading principle indicative of the very genius, of the very being of Chriſtianity. This chaſtiſing quality ſhould therefore be conſtantly made in education to operate as the only counteraction of that "knowledge which "puffeth up." Youth ſhould be taught that as humility is the diſcriminating characteriſtic of our religion, therefore a proud Chriſtian, a haughty diſciple of a crucified Maſter, furniſhes perhaps a ſtronger oppoſition in terms than the whole compaſs of language can exhibit. They ſhould be taught that humility being the appropriate

grace

grace of Chriſtianity, is preciſely the thing which makes Chriſtian and Pagan virtues *eſſentially* different. The virtues of the Romans, for inſtance, were obviouſly founded in pride; as a proof of this, they had not even a word in their copious language to expreſs humility, but what was uſed in a bad ſenſe, and conveyed the idea of meanneſs or vileneſs, of baſeneſs and ſervility. Chriſtianity ſo ſtands on its own ſingle ground, is ſo far from aſſimilating itſelf to the ſpirit of other religions, that, unlike the Roman Emperor, who, though he would not become a Chriſtian, yet ordered that the image of Chriſt ſhould be ſet up in the Pantheon with thoſe of the heathen gods, and be worſhipped in common with them; Chriſtianity not only rejects all ſuch partnerſhips with other religions, but it pulls down their images, defaces their temples, tramples on their honours, founds its own exiſtence on the ruins of ſpurious religions and ſpurious

virtues,

virtues, and will be every thing when it is admitted to be any thing.

Will it be going too much out of the way to obferve, that Chriftian Britain retaliates upon Pagan Rome? For if the former ufed humility in a bad fenfe, has not the latter learnt to ufe pride in a good one? May we without impertinence venture to remark, that, in the deliberations of as honourable and upright political affemblies as ever adorned, or, under Providence, upheld a country; in orations which leave us nothing to envy in Attic or Roman eloquence in their beft days: it were to be wifhed that we did not borrow from Rome an epithet which fuited the genius of her religion, as much as it militates againft that of ours? The panegyrift of the battle of Marathon, of Platea, or of Zama, might with propriety fpeak of a "proud day," or a "proud event," or a "proud fuccefs." But furely the Chriftian encomiafts of the battle of the Nile might, from their abundance, felect an

an epithet better appropriated to ſuch a victory—a victory which, by preſerving Europe, has perhaps preſerved that religion which ſets its foot on the very neck of pride, and in which the conqueror himſelf, even in the firſt ardors of triumph, forgot not to aſcribe the victory to ALMIGHTY GOD. Let us leave to the enemy both the term and the thing; arrogant words being the only weapons in which we muſt ever vail to their decided ſuperiority. As we muſt deſpair of the victory, let us diſdain the conteſt.

Above all things then you ſhould beware that your pupils do not take up with a vague, general, and undefined religion; but look to it that their Chriſtianity be really the religion of Chriſt. Inſtead of ſlurring over the doctrines of the Croſs, as diſreputable appendages to our religion, which are to be diſguiſed or got over as well as we can, but which are never to be dwelt upon, take care to make theſe your grand fundamental articles. Do not di-

lute, or explain away theſe doctrines, and by ſome elegant periphraſis *hint* at a Saviour, inſtead of makimg him the foundation ſtone of your ſyſtem. Do not convey primary, and plain, and awful, and indiſpenſible truths elliptically, I mean as ſomething that is to be underſtood without being expreſſed; nor ſtudy faſhionable circumlocutions to avoid names and things on which our ſalvation hangs, in order to prevent your diſcourſe from being offenſive. Perſons who are thus inſtructed in religion with more good-breeding than ſeriouſneſs and ſimplicity, imbibe a diſtaſte for plain ſcriptural language; and the Scriptures themſelves are ſo little in uſe with a certain faſhionable claſs of readers, that when the doctrines and language of the Bible occaſionally occur in other authors, or in converſation, they preſent a ſort of novelty and peculiarity which offend; and ſuch readers as diſuſe the Bible are apt, from a ſuppoſed delicacy of taſte, to call that preciſe and puritanical which

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is in fact found and scriptural. Nay, it has several times happened to the author to hear persons of sense and learning ridicule insulated sentiments and expressions that have fallen in their way, which they would have treated with decent respect had they known them to be, as they really were, texts of Scripture. This observation is hazarded with a view to enforce the importance of early communicating religious knowledge, and of infusing an early taste for the venerable phraseology of Scripture.

The persons in question thus possessing a kind of Pagan Christianity, are apt to acquire a sort of Pagan expression also, which just enables them to speak with complacency of the "Deity," of a "first "cause," and of "conscience." Nay, some may even go so far as to talk of "the Founder of our religion," of the "Author of Christianity," in the same general terms, as they would talk of the prophet of Arabia, or the lawgiver of China, of Athens, or of the Jews. But their

their refined ears revolt not a little at the unadorned name of Chriſt; and eſpecially the naked and unqualified term of our Saviour, or Redeemer, carries with it a queeriſh, inelegant, not to ſay a ſuſpicious ſound. They will expreſs a ſerious diſapprobation of what is wrong, under the moral term of *vice*, or the forenſic term of *crime;* but they are apt to think that the Scripture term of *ſin* has ſomething fanatical in it; and, while they diſcover a great reſpect for morality, they do not much reliſh holineſs, which is indeed the ſpecific and only morality of a Chriſtian. They will ſpeak readily of a man's reforming, or leaving off a vicious habit, or growing more correct in ſome individual practice; but the idea conveyed under any of the Scripture phraſes ſignifying a total change of heart, they would ſtigmatize as the very ſhibboleth of a ſect, though it is the language of a Liturgy they affect to admire, and of a Goſpel which they profeſs to receive.

CHAP. XIII.

Hints ſuggeſted for furniſhing young perſons with a ſcheme of prayer.

THOSE who are aware of the ineſtimable value of prayer themſelves, will naturally be anxious not only that this duty ſhould be earneſtly inculcated on their children, but that they ſhould be taught it in the beſt manner; and *ſuch* parents need little perſuaſion or counſel on the ſubject. Yet children of decent and orderly (I will not ſay of ſtrictly religious) families are often ſo ſuperficially inſtructed in this important buſineſs, that when they are aſked what prayers they uſe, it is not unuſual for them to anſwer, "the Lord's Prayer and "the *Creed*." And even ſome who are better taught, are not always made to underſtand with ſufficient clearneſs the

ſpecific

ſpecific diſtinction between the two; that the one is the confeſſion of their *faith*, and the other the model for their *ſupplications*. By this confuſed and indiſtinct beginning, they ſet out with a perplexity in their ideas, which is not always completely diſentangled in more advanced life.

An intelligent mother will ſeize the firſt occaſion which the child's opening underſtanding ſhall allow, for making a little courſe of lectures on the Lord's Prayer, taking every diviſion or ſhort ſentence ſeparately; for each furniſhes valuable materials for a diſtinct lecture. The child ſhould be led gradually through every part of this divine compoſition; ſhe ſhould be taught to break it into all the regular diviſions, into which indeed it ſo naturally reſolves itſelf. She ſhould be made to comprehend one by one each of its ſhort but weighty ſentences; to amplify and ſpread them out for the purpoſe of better underſtanding them, not in their moſt

extenſive and critical ſenſe, but in their moſt ſimple and obvious meaning. For in thoſe condenſed and ſubſtantial expreſſions every word is an ingot, and will bear beating out; ſo that the teacher's difficulty will not ſo much be what ſhe ſhall ſay as what ſhe ſhall ſuppreſs; ſo abundant is the expoſitory matter which this ſuccinct pattern ſuggeſts.

When the child has a pretty good conception of the meaning of each diviſion, ſhe ſhould then be made to obſerve the connection, relation, and dependance of the ſeveral parts of this prayer one upon another; for there is great method and connection in it. We pray that the "kingdom of God may come," as the beſt means to "hallow his name;" and that by us, the obedient ſubjects of his kingdom, "his will may be done." A judicious interpreter will obſerve how logically and conſequently one clauſe grows out of another, though ſhe will uſe neither the word logical nor conſequence; for all explana-

tions ſhould be made in the moſt plain and familiar terms, it being words, and not things, which commonly perplex children, if, as it ſometimes happens, the teacher, though not wanting ſenſe, want perſpicuity and ſimplicity *.

The young perſon, from being made a complete miſtreſs of this ſhort compoſition, (which as it is to be her guide and model through life, too much pains cannot be beſtowed on it,) will have a clearer conception, not only of its individual contents, but of prayer in general, than many ever attain, though their memory has been perhaps loaded with long and unexplained forms, which they have been accuſtomed to ſwallow in the lump without ſcrutiny and

* It might perhaps be a ſafe rule to eſtabliſh for prayer in general, to ſuſpect that any petition which cannot in ſome ſhape or other be accommodated to the ſpirit of ſome part of this prayer may not be right to be adopted. Here, temporal things are kept in their due ſubordination; they are aſked for moderately, as an acknowledgment of our dependance and of God's power; "for our heavenly Father "knoweth that we have need of theſe things."

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without difcrimination. Prayer fhould not be fo fwallowed. It is a regular prefcription which fhould ftand analyfis and examination: it is not a charm, the fuccefsful operation of which depends on your blindly taking it, without knowing what is in it, and in which the good you receive is promoted by your ignorance of its contents.

I would have it underftood that by thefe little comments, I do not mean that the child fhould be put to learn dry, and to her unintelligible expofitions; but that the expofition is to be colloquial. And here I muft remark in general, that the teacher is fometimes unreafonably apt to relieve herfelf at the child's expence, by loading the *memory* of a little creature on occafions in which far other faculties fhould be put in exercife. The child herfelf fhould be made to furnifh a good part of this extemporaneous commentary by her anfwers; in which anfwers fhe will be much affifted by the judgment the teacher ufes in her manner of queftioning. And the youthful underftanding, when its powers are

properly

properly ſet at work, will ſoon ſtrengthen by exerciſe, ſo as to furniſh reaſonable, if not very correct anſwers.

Written forms of prayer are not only uſeful and proper, but indiſpenſably neceſſary to begin with. But I will hazard the remark, that if children are thrown *excluſively* on the beſt forms, if they are made to commit them to memory like a copy of verſes, and to repeat them in a dry, cuſtomary way, they will produce little effect on their minds. They will not underſtand what they repeat, if we do not early open to them the important *ſcheme* of prayer. Without ſuch an elementary introduction to this duty, they will afterwards be either ignorant or enthuſiaſts, or both. We ſhould give them *knowledge* before we can expect them to make much progreſs in *piety*, and as a due preparative to it: Chriſtian inſtruction in this reſembling the ſun, who, in the courſe of his communications, gives light before he gives heat. And to labour to excite a ſpirit of devotion without firſt

 infuſing

infuſing that knowledge out of which it is to grow, is practically reviving the popiſh maxim, that Ignorance is the mother of Devotion, and virtually adopting the popiſh rule, of praying in an unknown tongue.

Children, let me again obſerve, will not attend to their prayers if they do not underſtand them; and they will not underſtand them, if they are not taught to analyſe, to diſſect them, to know their component parts, and to methodiſe them.

It is not enough to teach them to conſider prayer under the general idea that it is an application to God for what they want, and an acknowledgment to Him for what they have. This, though true in the groſs, is not ſufficiently preciſe and correct. They ſhould learn to define and to arrange all the different parts of prayer. And as a preparative to prayer itſelf, they ſhould be impreſſed with as clear an idea as their capacity and the nature of the ſubject will admit, of "Him with whom they have "to do." His omnipreſence is perhaps, of all

all his attributes, that of which we may make the firſt practical uſe. Every head of prayer is founded on ſome great ſcriptural truths, which truths the little analyſis here ſuggeſted will materially aſſiſt to fix in their minds.

On the knowledge that "God is," that he is an infinitely holy Being, and that "he is the rewarder of all them that "diligently ſeek him," will be grounded the firſt part of prayer, which is *adoration*. The creature devoting itſelf to the Creator, or *ſelf-dedication*, next preſents itſelf. And if they are firſt taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want help, which may be done by ſome eaſy analogy, they will eaſily be led to underſtand how naturally *petition* forms a moſt conſiderable branch of prayer: and divine grace being among the things for which they are to petition, this naturally ſuggeſts to the mind the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And when to this is added the conviction which will be readily worked

into

into an ingenuous mind, that as offending creatures they want pardon, the neceſſity of *confeſſion* will eaſily be made intelligible to them. But they ſhould be brought to underſtand that it muſt not be ſuch a general and vague confeſſion as awakens no ſenſe of perſonal humiliation, as excites no recollection of their own more peculiar and individual faults. But it muſt be a confeſſion founded on ſelf-knowledge, which is itſelf to ariſe out of the practice of ſelf-examination: for want of this ſort of diſcriminating habit, a well-meaning but ill-inſtructed girl may be caught confeſſing the ſins of ſome other perſon and omitting thoſe which are more eſpecially her own. On the gladneſs of heart natural to youth, it will be leſs difficult to impreſs the delightful duty of *thankſgiving*, which forms ſo conſiderable a branch of prayer. In this they ſhould be habituated to recapitulate not only their general, but to enumerate their peculiar, daily, and incidental mercies, in the ſame ſpecific manner

ner as they ſhould have been taught to detail their individual and perſonal *wants* in the petitionary, and their *faults* in the confeſſional part. The ſame warmth of feeling which will more readily diſpoſe them to expreſs their gratitude to God in thankſgiving, will alſo lead them more gladly to expreſs their love to their parents and friends, by adopting another indiſpenſable, and, to an affectionate heart, pleaſing part of prayer, which is *interceſſion.*

When they have been made, by a plain and perſpicuous mode of inſtruction, fully to underſtand the different nature of all theſe; and when they clearly comprehend that *adoration*, *ſelf-dedication*, *confeſſion*, *petition*, *thankſgiving*, and *interceſſion*, are diſtinct heads, which muſt not be involved in each other, you may exemplify the rules by pointing out to them theſe ſucceſſive branches in any well written form. And they will eaſily diſcern, that aſcription of glory to that God to whom we owe ſo much, and on whom we ſo entirely de-
pend,

pend, is the conclufion into which a Chriftian's prayer will naturally refolve itfelf. It is hardly needful to remind the teacher that our truly Scriptural Liturgy invariably furnifhes the example of prefenting *every* requeft in the name of the great Mediator. For there is no accefs to the Throne of Grace but by *that new and living way*. In the Liturgy too they will meet with the beft exemplifications of prayers, exhibiting feparate fpecimens of each of the diftinct heads we have been fuggefting.

But in order that the minds of young perfons may, without labour or difficulty, be gradually brought into fuch a ftate of preparation as to be benefited by fuch a little courfe of lectures as we have recommended; they fhould, from the time when they were firft able to read, have been employing themfelves at their leifure hours, in laying in a ftore of provifion for their prefent demands. And here the memory may be employed to good purpofe;

poſe; for being the firſt faculty which is ripened, and which is indeed perfected when the others are only beginning to unfold themſelves, this is an intimation of Providence that it ſhould be the firſt ſeized on for the beſt uſes. It ſhould therefore be devoted to lay in a ſtock of the more eaſy and devotional parts of Scripture. The Pſalms alone are an inexhauſtible ſtore-houſe of rich materials*. Children, whoſe minds have been early well furniſhed from theſe, will be competent at nine or ten years old to produce from them, and to ſelect with no contemptible judgment, ſuitable examples of all the parts of prayer; and will be able to

* This will be ſo far from ſpoiling the cheerfulneſs, or impeding the pleaſures of childhood, that the Author knows a little girl who, before ſhe was ſeven years old, had learnt the whole Pſalter through a ſecond time; and that without any diminution of uncommon gaiety of ſpirits, or any interference with the elegant acquirements ſuited to her ſtation.

extract

extract and appropriate texts under each respective head, so as to exhibit, without help, complete specimens of every part of prayer. By confining them entirely to the sense, and nearly to the words of Scripture, they will be preserved from enthusiasm, from irregularity, and conceit. By being obliged continually to apply for themselves, they will get a habit in all their difficulties of "searching the Scrip-"tures," which may be hereafter useful to them on other and more trying occasions. But I would at first *confine* them to the Bible; for were they allowed with equal freedom to ransack other books with a view to get helps to embellish their little compositions, or rather compilations, they might be tempted to pass off for their own what they pick up from others, which might tend at once to make them both vain and deceitful. This is a temptation to which they are too much laid open when they find themselves extravagantly commended

commended for any pilfered paſſage with which they decorate their little themes and letters. But in the preſent inſtance there is no danger of any ſimilar deception, for there is ſuch a ſacred ſignature ſtamped on every Scripture phraſe, that the owner's name can never be defaced or torn off from the goods, either by fraud or violence.

It would be well, if in thoſe Pſalms which children were firſt directed to get by heart, an eye were had to this their future application; and that they were employed, but without any intimation of your ſubſequent deſign, in learning ſuch as may be beſt turned to this account. In the hundred and thirty-ninth, the firſt great truth to be imprinted on the young heart, the divine omnipreſence, as was before obſerved, is unfolded with ſuch a mixture of majeſtic grandeur, and ſuch an intereſting variety of intimate and local circumſtances, as is likely to ſeize on the quick

and lively feelings of youth. The awful idea that that Being whom ſhe is taught to reverence, is not only *in general* "acquainted with all her ways," but that "he is about her path, and about "her bed," beſtows ſuch a ſenſe of real and preſent exiſtence on *him* of whom ſhe is apt to conceive as having his diſtant habitation only in Heaven, as will greatly help her to realize the ſenſe of his actual preſence.

The hundred and third Pſalm will open to the mind rich and abundant ſources of expreſſion for gratitude and thankſgiving, and it includes the acknowledgment of ſpiritual as well as temporal favours. It illuſtrates the compaſſionate mercies of God by familiar and domeſtic images, of ſuch peculiar tenderneſs and exquiſite endearment, as are calculated to ſtrike upon every chord of filial fondneſs in the heart of an affectionate child. The fifty-firſt ſupplies an infinite variety of matter in

whatever

whatever relates to confeſſion of ſin, or to ſupplication for the aids of the Spirit. The twenty-third abounds with captivating expreſſions of the protecting goodneſs and tender love of their heavenly Father, conveyed by paſtoral imagery of uncommon beauty and ſweetneſs: in ſhort, the greater part of theſe charming compoſitions overflows with materials for every head of prayer.

The child who, while ſhe was engaged in learning theſe Scriptures, was not aware that there was any ſpecific object in view, or any farther end to be anſwered by it, will afterwards feel an unexpected pleaſure ariſing from the application of her petty labours, when ſhe is called to draw out from her little treaſury of knowledge the ſtores ſhe has been inſenſibly collecting; and will be pleaſed to find that without any freſh application to ſtudy, for ſhe is now obliged to exerciſe a higher faculty than memory, ſhe has lying ready in her mind the materials with which ſhe is at length

length called upon to work. Her judgment muſt be ſet about ſelecting one, or two, or more texts which ſhall contain the ſubſtance of every ſpecific head of prayer before noticed; and it will be a farther exerciſe to her underſtanding to concatenate the detached parts into one regular whole, occaſionally varying the arrangement as ſhe likes; that is, changing the order, ſometimes beginning with invocation, ſometimes with confeſſion; ſometimes dwelling longer on one part, ſometimes on another. As the hardſhips of a religious Sunday are often ſo pathetically pleaded, as making one of the heavy burdens of religion; and as the friends of religion are ſo often called upon to mitigate its intolerable rigours, by recommending pleaſant employment, might not ſuch an exerciſe as has been here ſuggeſted help, by varying its occupations, to lighten its load?

The habits of the pupil being thus early formed, her memory, attention, and in-

tellect being bent in a right direction, and the exerciſe invariably maintained, may we not reaſonably hope that her *affections* alſo, through divine grace, may become intereſted in the work, till ſhe will be enabled "to pray with the ſpirit and with the "underſtanding alſo?" She will now be qualified to uſe a well-compoſed form, if neceſſary, with ſerious neſs and advantage; for ſhe will now uſe it not mechanically, but rationally. That which before appeared to her a mere maſs of good words, will now appear a ſignificant compoſition, exhibiting variety, and regularity, and beauty; and while ſhe will have the farther advantage of being enabled by her improved judgment to diſtinguiſh and ſelect for her own purpoſe ſuch prayers as are more judicious and more ſcriptural, it will alſo habituate her to look for plan, and deſign, and lucid order, in other works.

THE END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

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